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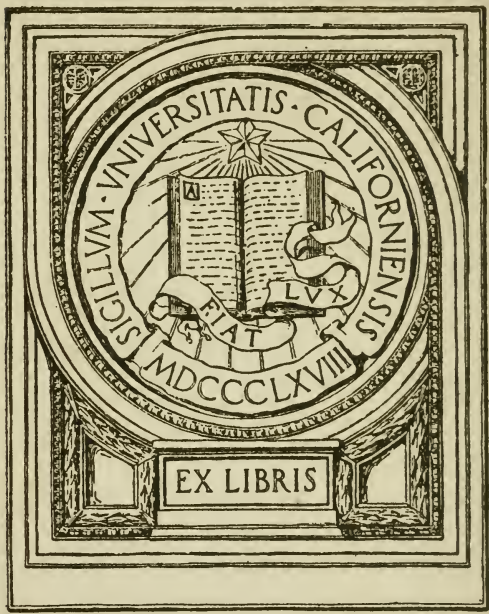

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Modern Sermons by World Scholars

VOLUME IX

SHAHAN TO THOMAS

MODERN SERMONS
BY
WORLD SCHOLARS

EDITED BY
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IN TEN VOLUMES
VOLUME IX—SHAHAN TO THOMAS

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SHAHAN

THE TRIUMPH OF THE GALILEAN

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THE TRIUMPH OF THE GALILEAN[1]

PROF. THOMAS J. SHAHAN, D.D.

"*For he must reign.*"—1 Cor. 15 : 25.

THE long and weary vigils of the Passion week are over. The magnificent drama of the trial and execution of the Man-God has been once more acted before the eyes of mankind. The human soul has been once more moved to its very depths, and the mighty gamut of human emotions has given forth every note of which it is capable. Throughout these days there has been put before us in language rarely grave and beautiful, saturate with the tears and sighs of nineteen centuries, the most awe-inspiring panorama that the heart of man can conceive—the closing scenes of those innumerable years of history, in which all things were "moving to one far-off divine event." The shining pinnacles of the Temple and the bare rock of Calvary alternate with the gaunt strong eagles of Rome and the solemn figures of priest and Pharisee. On that gibbet in mid-air, between heaven and earth, were accomplished mysteries whose course was running from the first moment of

[1] From "The House of God and Other Addresses," by permission of the author. (The Cathedral Library Association, New York.)

time—the death-knell of a glorious ancient State, unique among the organisms of the world, the divine transformation of the vast political unity into which it was merged, the obliteration forever of the causes which held apart the great families of mankind, and the binding of humanity in an uninterrupted mystic intercourse with its Creator, its Preserver, Provider, and Redeemer. On that small but significant stage, life and death, time and eternity, sin and grace, despair and hope, struggled with grim resolution for the mastery of the heart of man. The great lines of the life of Jesus Christ had been steadily converging until there was at last left but one terrible week, forever memorable among the children of men. And as every epic hour went by, freighted with agonies, the hopes and the anxieties of centuries; as every new scene swept mankind nearer to life eternal or death irretrievable, it seemed as tho the strain were greater than the heart could bear, and as if its innermost fiber ought to burst with the excess of the fine and swift emotions that the tragedy of Calvary never fails to awaken.

At last it is over. Love and life have triumphed up there on the wood of the cross, amid the holy silence of nature and the awe-struck adoration of the angels. And the heart of man pours forth its pent feelings and blesses the sacred wood on which the mystery

of existence has been solved, and through which a sufficient value has been secured for life, and the bright star of hope fixed like a jewel in the forehead of time. The symbol of civil infamy has become the symbol of a blessed eternity, as tho to impress forever on the human imagination the completeness of the victory and its superhuman character; as tho to humiliate most effectively the accursed pride of man by the elevation to immortal influence of the accepted sign of what was lowly, humble, vile, and despised.

With a touching realism the medieval painters loved to show the crucified Jesus sustained by the overshadowing hands of the Heavenly Father. They would indicate the current of divine strength that buoyed Him up, and they would show to the multitudes that thronged the spaces of their cathedrals that the essence of Christianity is in the cross; that it fills and dominates Christian life and teaching, and that any view of Jesus in which the mystery of the cross is absent may be a specious philosophy of human life, but cannot claim the acceptance of the true followers of Jesus.

Surely, when the risen Jesus came forth on that first Easter day and stood again a living man in the sweetness and freshness of an Oriental morning, there passed before His mind the long series of those who had since Adam preserved in their hearts the essence of relig-

ion undefiled—the patriarchs and the prophets, the kings and the priests, and the holy chosen souls of the children of Abraham. And He could see how it was through suffering and repeated chastisement, through lowliness and self-abasement and separation from the Gentile, that Israel had kept a remnant of faith in Him. He could see how His own life had been but a long *Via Dolorosa*, a gradual ascent to the dread shambles of Calvary. And looking forward in the warm young sunlight and the odorous breezes of that restful hour, He could as clearly see that the "Way of the Cross" had but just begun. He could see that she whom He would leave after Him, His cleansed and sanctified spouse, His beloved Church, would be forced to tread its cruel windings, and drink many a time and oft of the torrent in the way, ere she stood again by His side in the kingdom of the Father.

But in that long succession of ages of sorrow and epochs of honor and power He looked surely with boundless joy on the day when His Church would come forth, like Himself, from the tomb, and stand in the light of day triumphant over every alliance and girt for a sublime career; when the patience and faith of His followers would be rewarded by the adhesion of an entire world to the doctrines they had so long and so bravely died for. And we rejoice with them for this triumph of

light over darkness, of hope over despair, of life over death and sin, of order and peace over chaos and discord. We rejoice for the fresh and vigorous purpose given to life, for the uplifting of humanity to a celestial level, and for the memorable vindication of His faithful ones, whereby the world learned that He is powerful to requite, merciful to shorten the hour of trial, bountiful beyond measure in His rewards, King, Priest, and Prophet of His people forevermore, " the author and finisher of faith, who, having joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God " (Heb. 12 : 2).

What language is sufficient to depict the human odds that were arrayed against the work of Jesus Christ! There was the pagan world permeated with an ancient and venerable polytheism with which there could be no truce. There was the Jewish state, and then a Jewish nation, world-wide, influential, and violent. There were the disruptions of its own membership by false and ruinous opinions about God, Christ, and the Church. There were countless shapes of self-interest and a multitude of passions—in a word, all the established estates of human society were instinctively allied against the new doctrine.

And yet it bore down all opposition! The sacramental power of the Word of God, preached by thousands of devoted men whose

daily lives were the commentary of their discourse, made a great breach in the society of Greece and Rome. The force of example was contagious beyond belief. The blood of the martyrs was like dragons' teeth, and the persecutions like a favorable atmosphere. The confessor, loyal in his foul dungeon, and the martyr, blazing in his painful tunic, were apostles of a new order, and their stedfastness led thousands to suspect that the religion of these witnesses was more than human, and that there existed a power and a sanction beyond those of Cæsar.

It was a victory of moral worth over might and custom, that brought with it a social recognition of a higher and invisible order of things to which man was responsible, and in which his acts would not necessarily be judged as they are here below. Henceforth men can tolerate the scandal of a Caligula or a Nero, for they know that such are but monsters of the lower and temporary order of things, in which the will of the Father has been frustrated, but not forever nor with impunity. It was a victory and a permanent one for the doctrine of immortality, so necessary to the welfare if not the existence of any State. Hitherto it had fared ill with the idea of another world. The scandal of successful vice and the growing intelligence of humanity had shattered the earlier and simpler notions of the gods. And if there yet lingered among

the people some notion of future rewards and punishments, it was utterly dead in the minds of those who needed it the most as a check or an impulse—the governing classes. With the triumph of the Church it penetrated all classes of society. Without this belief man will soon degenerate into a beast, and society become a moral jungle, in which the strong shall hunt the weak, and they, in their turn, prey upon the more helpless. When the dying Christian cited his tormentor before the bar of eternal justice, he bore witness to a higher and a better world in which justice itself reigned; to a moral law the same for all and that dominated and regulated all, even to the least and most invisible of human acts. Sublime conception! What wonder that the slave at his toil, the soldier resting on his spear in the long night watches, the artist busy with order and grace and proportion, the philosopher combining his theories of the universe, the man and woman of the world weary with the sight of wrong and oppression unpunished, should welcome a teaching in which provision was made for an all-knowing and all-powerful Judge, who would deal out to each according to his merits, and would repair at last the cruel and seemingly irremediable injustice of social life!

The victory of Jesus Christ was the victory of faith over doubt. Without faith man is lost. The world of the ancients was honey-

combed with doubt. Men walked among shattered ideals as on a field of corpses—ideals of nationality, religion, philosophy, and science. They had hoped and struggled and borne up against the conviction that beyond the grave there was neither life nor order, but only endless night and blind chaos. They had pinned their faith to men and schemes, and men had been weak, or had failed or betrayed, and schemes had gone awry. And only one thing seemed certain and stable, the fortune of Rome that flaunted there on the banner of its legions its own logical symbol of human life—an eagle of gold with stout and cruel beak and talons of steel made to lacerate and disrupt and ruin. But with the resurrection of Jesus came faith in one good and true God, a God neither weak nor jealous nor indifferent, as had been the gods of antiquity. And faith grew. It charmed the souls of the men and women who followed Jesus. It was bedewed with the blood that was shed on Calvary, and warmed with the light of the resurrection. It was like the mustard-seed that waxed great and strong and serviceable. In the poverty and lowliness and simplicity of the first centuries of Christianity it found its proper atmosphere, and in the blood-soaked sands of the arena its most propitious soil. It filled the world with its glorious aroma—an imperishable confidence in the veracity and fidelity of God and in the merits and love of His di-

vine Son, Jesus Christ. It filled the individual heart with a vivid efficacious sense of the presence, the power, the goodness of God, of His abiding love for each soul, and His real coefficiency in our daily life. It lifted the hearts that welcomed it beyond the attaint of scandal and despair, and suffused with a delicious peace and gladness the eyes of those in whose hearts it found a shelter.

The victory of Christian faith was a victory of liberty of conscience. It maintained the principle which the Maccabees had died for, that there was an inner kingdom of the soul to which no temporal power might reach, *i e.*, the real distinction of the double order of the spiritual and the temporal, the only true and permanent refuge of human liberty and happiness. It was for this the martyrs died, and if we enjoy it to-day, it is because they heroically refused to compound in the slightest or to sacrifice one iota of the demands of conscience. With the victory of Christianity came also a deeper sense of human dignity. In Christ every human being had taken a higher status, was but a little removed from the angels. The doctrine of the real humanity of Christ brought with it, as a consequence, the spiritual equality of man and woman, Greek and barbarian, the freeman and the slave. So fell the partition walls of the ancient society, broad and high as they were, and of ancient date. There was no external

change, and men maintained with contentment or with patience the social order. But in the Christian Church and at its countless altars the gravest of changes had taken place. For the first time since the creation all men were brothers, and the curse of a common hate was banished to make way for the benison of a common love.

What wonder then, with these new views as to the existence and nature of a moral law, the doctrine of immortality, of divine faith, of liberty of conscience, of the spiritual order as distinct from the temporal, of human dignity and spiritual equality—what wonder that the triumph of Christianity should have greatly modified the social order at once! A multitude of persons received new or additional rights—woman, the child, the slave, the captive, the prisoner. The logical consequences of a moral law were drawn and applied. Pity no longer seemed to be a contemptible emotion, and thereupon war was robbed of much of its horror. In time, the idea of just and unjust wars obtained, and the germs of an international law were planted, an institution that could scarcely be imagined before.

The social authority itself took a new character. It became less absolute and selfish. The laws of Rome grew more humane. The imperial power learned to curb itself and to reckon with an eternal and absolute justice,

with that kingdom of heaven that it once feared as its rival and now knew to be its exemplar, ally, and guarantor. The foundations of modern civilization were laid on the day when a Roman Emperor bore the cross upon his diadem, while yet the splendid mass of empire was intact. All the humanizing influences of gentleness, meekness, humility, tenderness and love; the doctrine of man's equality with man; the authority of Christian public opinion; the mighty springs of action called the Scripture and Christian tradition or custom; the existence of a supreme law and an omnipotent Lawgiver; the belief in a loving heavenly influence that touches man on all sides, in all capacities and functions—all these entered upon the stage of life as practical factors in the world-old problems that had yet found no solution or only a bad one.

One moment it seemed as if the labors of three bleeding centuries were in vain, when the perverted genius of Julian the Apostate undertook to remount the dark and painful stream of time and restore to their ancient pedestals the broken creatures of the hands of man. But it was in vain, and there is a deep truth in the legend that as he tore the Persian arrow from his heart he cried out in a paroxysm of despair: "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean!" Yes, the Galilean had triumphed. For "the weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the

strong. And the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and things that are not, that he might bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his sight" (1 Cor. 1:27-29).

Like a body that is saturated with a poisonous atmosphere, the ancient world of humankind was soaked through and through with pride; in every stratum of human society were visible its awful consequences in lust, cruelty, despair—at last in a horrid satanic craze of greatness at any cost known as "the Cæsarean folly."

The ancient world shuddered at the approach of the Galilean. And well it might! For now the ax was at the root, now the firm hand of the physician was laid upon the cankerous growth that was eating out the vitality of the soul. The remedy of Jesus was awe-inspiring. By the same causes that man fell should he come back to the straight road of salvation. The Alps of pride should be leveled in the lowest abyss of humility. The rude beams of the cross of Calvary would be uplifted in mid-air over against that hill where men had heaped up such a Babel-like pile of power and glory and wealth as had never entered the heart of a Rameses or a Cyrus to conceive. The two cities should henceforth dominate all history—Rome and Jerusalem—the city of Christ and the city

of Cæsar, the symbol of love and humility and the symbol of power, pride, and hate. Two hills should henceforth uplift their heads before the children of men—the Vatican and the Palatine—and from either should shine a light to all the generations that pass—on the one the gentle flame of pity and affection for all mankind, on the other the baleful torch of war and destruction.

Yes! the Galilean had triumphed. Nevermore shall we look upon a human monster seated upon the throne of the world. Nevermore shall we see despair like a flood drowning the hearts of men. Nevermore shall love and pity and conscience die out from among us leaving life blank and empty. The Galilean has opened a way, even Himself, out of every abyss of individual or social degradation. He has loosened forever the voice of truth that can now no more be hushed or impounded than the free air of the mountain-top. He has uncovered the spring of eternal life, and thither, to His sacred side, must come the long procession of humanity, that mystic multitude of His brethren whom He promised to draw onward and upward to Him when He should have climbed the resplendent throne of His victorious cross.

But how about this age? many will ask. Has not the Galilean failed to charm it? And is not the world slipping from the moral grasp of the hands that so long held it? And is not

the spirit, at least, of Antichrist in the air? And have not a hundred Christian institutions perished from among men? And is not the Word of God made a mockery? And is not His divine spouse, the Church, cast out from the societies, the cultures, and the legislations that she either saved or built up?

I will not question the just complainings of so many millions of Christian hearts. But how can I avoid reverting to the attitude, in worse circumstances, of the men and women whose career we have been contemplating? What patience and gladness in their conduct, what calm joy in their lives! Here and there comes to us a faint murmur of complaint and vexation, of haste to be done with this wretched shambles of an earth, with this footstool of the prince of hell. But as a rule they took the world as they found it. Only, by individual faith, hope, and charity, by the aroma of their own daily conduct, by the perfecting of the individual self, by the cleansing of each his own heart, they diminished the mass of corruption and increased the inheritance of Jesus. What was the result? That the world which to them seemed not only the spirit of Antichrist, but the ravenous beast himself, was overcome by love and humility and patience and spiritual firmness. There have, it is true, been many centuries of glorious triumphant Christianity, but Christ never promised that the world, or the societies

in which the world has always resided, would become or remain finally Christian. Rather do His divine words prepare us for change and deception and disappointment in this respect. Society is made up of souls, and it is in them, finally, that science and law and culture and all human activities rise and grow great. Let us look to these souls, our own and others! Let us cultivate some of that noble enthusiasm for the person of Jesus Christ that filled like a tide the souls of the early Christians! Let us look into our own hearts and ask ourselves if we who complain or wonder are not ourselves to some extent the architects of the situation by our natural and slothful lives, and if we do not cover by complaints against the age a timid and an indolent faith!

As in His infinitely intelligent mercy God has closed up our hearts the one from the other, so He has hidden from all the final hour of our existence, that we might work while there was light, since no one knows when the darkness will fall. And there is light yet, and the harvests are yet standing, as white as when Jesus showed them to His apostles. And the storms are no greater, surely, than when He chided the apostles for their little faith. There have been ages of more universal doubt, false philosophies more subtle and spiritual, more self-consistent and widespread, than those of to-day; states and gov-

ernments less sympathetic, and with fewer lessons of experience; epochs of a greater confusion of the temporal and the spiritual, the finite and the infinite. Yet in the end they stretched out imploring hands to Jesus, and they were counted among the willing victims of His love.

Beneath the surface tides of the ocean there are deep, irresistible currents that girdle the earth and shed warmth and comfort or icy chill upon its shores. So in the movements of God's purposes. Much is hidden from us that will one day be revealed. We must always walk on earth like

> "The patient plodding weaver
> Who works on the wrong side evermore,
> But works for the right side ever."

But we may be sure that one day the divine love will have its way, and that it is capable of working reconciliations greater than that of the twentieth century, with the Father of days. It roused a smile on the face of Tertullian to think that Cæsar could ever confess Christ—yet the world lived to see Constantine and Theodosius and Justinian and Charlemagne! Could we but bend some microscope on the ages to come, what purpose and design we should see where now all seems aimless and orderless! When St. Augustine uttered his haunting cry, "Thou hast made us for thee, O Lord, and restless are our hearts till

they repose in thee,'' he must have meant society as well as the individual, since the social order is at once the most natural and the highest flowering of the human instinct. Christ is of all ages, '' Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day, and the same forever.'' And all ages are Christ's, given Him by the Father, bearing the seal of redemption, and holding the offer of salvation.

Even now this last of the ages is mightily torn by the thirst for unity and the longing for peace and harmony. The license that lurks in all liberty, and the weariness and inertness that cling to all matter, gild it as you will, are henceforth incontrovertible, and men seem no longer quite so averse as formerly to listening to the mandate, the teachings, and the history of the Church that sustains on earth the person and breathes the pure and holy spirit of Jesus Christ.

SMITH

THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

HENRY PRESERVED SMITH

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THE TRANSFORMED LIFE

PROF. HENRY PRESERVED SMITH, D.D.

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, even as we obtained mercy we faint not; but we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."—2 Cor. 4 : 1, 2.

THESE words lay before us the secret of a successful life. No one who knows the career of the author will be disposed to deny that his was a successful life. Whether we apply the standard of enduring fame, the standard of influence upon his own generation and the after-world, or the standard of real good to mankind—in short judged by any but the most materialistic criterion the life of the apostle Paul was eminently successful. And the secret of it, its impulse and its method, is set forth in the words of the text.

It is always interesting to get a glimpse into a man's soul. Such glimpses are given us at times of strong emotion when the man in self-justification lays his motives before us and says: Judge for yourselves. The apostle was in just this situation when he wrote his second letter to the Corinthians. He had

been under severe trial at Ephesus, having barely escaped with his life. He had had great anxiety for the church to which he was writing because of its divisions and its immoralities. He had been attacked and misunderstood by some of the converts whom he loved as his own children. He had been accused and ridiculed by some who claimed to have the endorsement of the Jerusalem church. The impassioned defense of which our text is a part was written under the stress of these combined experiences. If these disciples could only know the underlying motive of his life they could not accuse him as they are doing! This is what he thinks and so he lays bare his heart.

The fundamental fact which explains the life of Paul, as he here puts it before us, is that he bears in his heart a vision of God. We all, he says, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are transformed into the same image. No doubt he has in mind the experience which overtook him on the way to Damascus. But he does not seem to think this experience one which was confined to himself. His vision of God in Christ which began with that Damascus revelation is the same which all Christians enjoy. Otherwise he could not say we all have it. What now concerns us is that the vision is a formative power in the life of him who has it. First of all Paul remarks almost in passing, as if it were

a thing too obvious to call for remark, that he has a ministry. I need hardly say that he is not thinking of his apostleship in any official definition of the word. He thinks of himself (as we have just seen) as one among many disciples of Christ. These all have the vision of Christ, and the natural, inevitable sequel is that they are called to service of Him. The case of Paul himself is only a conspicuous example of the rule. He had been a persecutor of the Christians. He had done many things contrary to the name of Jesus. Suddenly he came to a realization that his course had been altogether wrong. What now was his plain duty? Evidently to undo, so far as he could, the wrong he had done; to make plain to all who knew him that he had discovered his error; to become an advocate where he had been an opposer. So much his common sense showed him. But it was not only a matter of cool common-sense calculation. His experience was not merely an intellectual change of view. What he saw was Jesus the Messiah of Israel to be sure, but it was also Jesus the Savior of Paul the sinner.. It is not without reason that he inserts in the text the clause: "As we have received mercy." The responsibility laid upon him was not simply that given by the discovery of a new truth; it was that of a grateful heart conscious that it has been delivered from a great danger or a great misery. "What wilt thou have me to do?"—

this is the expression of the whole-souled loyalty called out by such an experience, and it was this which laid his responsibility on the apostle.

In the rapture of such an experience the grateful heart might wish to spend its time in contemplation and adoration. Not infrequently this has been the actual result of a profound religious experience; the convert has fled from the world and devoted himself to the hermit life, spending his time in living over his visions, seeking new and more exquisite joys from the beloved. We will not sit in judgment on such devotees. Their method was not the method of the apostle. In visions and revelations of the Lord he was not behind the chiefest of them, but his visions stimulated him to the active life of service rather than the contemplative life of the quietist. The truth of Christ was to him something to be shared with his fellow-men. In Christ God was reconciling the world unto Himself—not Paul alone but all mankind were to receive the glad tidings. Common human sympathy joined with the gratitude of the apostle to urge him forward in this ministry committed to him.

Nor is this all. The believer is not merely a man among men upon whom the common humanity has claims. He is admitted to union with his Lord, and therefore shares His responsibility. Christ came to seek and to

save; this was His mission, His responsibility, His privilege. So far as I have experience of Him I am admitted to the same privilege and have the same mission committed to me. We preach not ourselves but Christ as Lord. Whose Lord? Not mine alone, yours equally. I bring you this claim of His in the hope of showing Him to you as Lord. This (says Paul) is the ministry I have received in having mercy shown me. Paul goes very far in attempting to show us how thoroughly this mission of Christ has become his mission. Looking at the celestial vision he says we are transformed into the same image. Christ dwelling in us has made us reflections of Himself, His motive has become our motive, His impulse our impulse. Such at least is the view of Paul.

The vision of Christ lays upon him who receives it a responsibility and furnishes him a motive. But in addition it purifies his methods. The text puts this very strongly: "We have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully." There is perhaps an intentional contrast between the method of the apostle and the method of the world at large. The hidden things of shame, that is the things which shame would keep under cover, are simply the things of which the ordinary man is ashamed when they are found out. The natural man delights in craft,

finesse, in doing things by indirection. "Lying is the salt of a man," says the Arab proverb. To discover how to keep within the letter of the law is the desire of many an outwardly respectable man among us even to-day. Deceit and hypocrisy have always been the refuge of the weak and self-indulgent, of those who choose the path of least resistance.

But according to the text the man who has a vision of Christ rejects all these. Christ's method is that of truth and honesty. He was truth itself. And I mean this in no transcendental or metaphysical sense. He was the embodiment of sincerity; His words reflected His thought without reservation, evasion, or concealment. And so with His method. Let us suppose for an instant that Jesus had been a practised politician. It is altogether conceivable that He might have secured an outward triumph by compromise. By coalition with the Pharisees He might even have advanced Himself to the throne of Israel. It needs but a moment's reflection to see that by such methods He would have secured the real ruin of the cause He had at heart, and that He would have ceased to be what He really was. It is in fact impossible to suppose that He would deceive or compromise or even temporize.

If this be true of the Master it must be true of the disciple, and we see how the apostle found in the vision of Jesus a force that made

him renounce the hidden things of dishonesty. To adopt underhanded methods for one who knows Christ is to be untrue to His ideals, to be untrue to Himself. And what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose himself?

It is not without reason that our author specifies among the things which he renounces the adulteration of the Word of God. There is perhaps no temptation to which good men are so subject as the temptation to make the good cause prevail by compromise. The maxim that the end justifies the means is not confined to the Jesuits but has large vogue among those who pride themselves on being practical men. Directness and simplicity are not in themselves attractive; they often seem coarse and brutal. The demands of the gospel when put with that great plainness of speech of which the apostle Paul himself gives us examples—these demands seem extreme and at first they repel rather than attract. In this condition of things the preacher is tempted to make the message palatable by toning it down. There is a devil's saying to the effect that unadulterated truth is too stimulating to be given to the average man. The implication is that it is necessary to dilute it in order to make it acceptable. We can all understand the temptation, and we can appreciate the force of the apostle's words when he declares that this is not his method. He knew

what the temptation was. In the communities in which he preached there was an extraordinary interest in philosophical discussion. Hence he says "the Greeks seek after wisdom." It must have seemed to his hearers that a man of his talent might give his gospel a more philosophical dress. But the great preacher saw that to mix his gospel would be to disguise it, and the question would be whether his hearers accepted the truth or preferred the baser substance which he had mixed with it.

Such a temptation comes to every preacher and it is not always simply a temptation to adulterate the truth in order to secure a temporary success. The preacher is himself a man, and his conception of the gospel may not have been clarified from tradition or prejudice. We easily identify the gospel with other things which are of value to us. We should be glad to see the gospel triumph, provided only that it is the gospel of our church, or provided that it is the gospel in the form of our creed. Our watchword is, perhaps, the gospel and our reconstruction of society, the gospel and our form of government, the gospel and our theology. All these adulterations were rejected by the apostle. He found that the vision of his Lord made them impossible. He determined to know nothing among the people to whom he preached except Jesus the Christ. The vision of his Lord forbade more

than one message, forbade more than one object of effort.

Whoever reproduces in his own thought the experience of the apostle will realize the force of the two points already brought out, namely: that the vision of God in Christ lays a responsibility upon the one who receives it, and that it purifies his motives and his method. It remains to notice the positive side of his activity. What in fact does he do in pursuance of the responsibility he has received? The answer is contained in the concluding portion of the text: "By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." The author of the words has already indicated that his message is the word of God, that is the gospel, and he has indicated his determination not to adulterate it. He now uses a broader term; he speaks of manifesting the truth. This is to show that the gospel is something to be lived rather than something to be preached. And to this agrees the statement we have already considered—that the Christian, having the vision of Christ, is changed into something of the same glory. What Paul saw in Jesus which convinced him that he was in presence of God was His moral perfection, the virtues crowned by love. This was the thing which took possession of him, purified him, renewed him. He who receives this truth into himself lives it. He cannot

help manifesting it, therefore, and his manifestation of it appeals to the consciences of his fellow-men. In another passage you remember the apostle is very bold and says: "It is no longer I that live, but Christ lives in me." And yet that he is not too bold some of us can testify who have had similar experiences. It was said of a good and beautiful woman that to know her was a liberal education. There are lives which when we come into contact with them enter into our lives, persons who become part of ourselves so that they live in us. It is in this way in fact that the truth has made and still makes advance. The preacher may preach day in and day out for a lifetime; if the gospel is not lived it will have no power.

It is not meaningless, moreover, when the apostle adds that his appeal is to the consciences of men. Here is where the true value lies. And the works of permanence in the history of the world are those which make their appeal to the conscience. In other words the true values are moral values. Much as men try to get away from this truth it remains the great lesson of history. And here lies the secret of success which we have been trying to learn. Paul might have appealed to the intellect of his time, and his work would surely have become antiquated. He might have appealed to its taste, and the appeal would long ago have ceased to have value.

But because he appealed to the conscience he is still a power in the world—read and studied and followed as one of the immortal teachers of the race.

The experience we have been studying may strike you as exceptional and you may say that while it is of real historical interest it is not after all of practical value to us. But this would be a mistake. It is precisely because the apostle reveals the law of spiritual progress in the world that his experience is of value to us. True religion—the life of the spirit—has spread by just the sacred contagion which the text sets before us. Life is communicated by life. The life of God in Jesus Christ flames out from Him and kindles other souls. In these souls it has the effect which Paul so graphically describes in his own case; it inspires new motives, it purifies away the baser tendencies of human nature, it leads men to appeal to the consciences of their fellow-men.

A cataclysmic vision of Christ such as came to the great preacher on the road to Damascus does not come to every one—this I grant you. But it does not follow that we less stalwart souls have no vision of Jesus. What else is it than the vision of Jesus that we get from our Bibles? What else from the history of the Church? What else from the lives of sainted men of past times and of our own generation? It is not true that the power of Jesus' life

exhausted itself in the extraordinary experiences of the early centuries. Every period of advance in human thought and life has been marked by a rediscovery of Jesus and a new manifestation of His life of power. The question is not whether we have such a vision as Paul had; the question is whether we are willing to let such vision as we have work itself out in our lives. If we genuinely do this we shall be able to say that we too under the stress of this vision faint not in our work, and that we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

SPAETH

JESUS, THE HEALER OF SOUL AND BODY

ADOLPH SPAETH

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JESUS, THE HEALER OF SOUL AND BODY

PROF. ADOLPH SPAETH, D.D., LL.D.

" And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house. But when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.—Matt. 9 : 2-8.

THIS world of ours is a large hospital, full of sufferers, languishing and perishing in " soul and body " (Isaiah 10 : 18). And our dear Bible is the true medical book for this hospital, describing everything most clearly and comprehensively; the disease, the physician, the healing. The disease: " The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it " (Isaiah 1 : 5, 6). We hear the wail of the sufferer: " Wretched man that I am! Who shall de-

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liver me from the body of this death? " (Rom. 7 : 24) ; the supplicant's entreaty to Him who alone is able to help: " Cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved " (Ps. 80 : 3). And such outcry from the depth is answered by the voice of the Helper from above: " I am the Lord that healeth thee " (Exodus 15 : 26). And what a physician He is! The eyes of thousands upon thousands look up to Him with wonder, adoration and praise: " Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows . . . and with his stripes we are healed " (Isaiah 53 : 4, 5) ; healed, so that " my heart and my flesh sing for joy unto the living God " (Ps. 84 : 2, R. V.). From the midst of the hospital the multitude of convalescents send forth their jubilant song of praise: " Bless the Lord, O my soul, . . . Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies " (Ps. 103 : 3, 4), who healeth thee and millions with thee, in soul and body. Nowhere, even in the Scriptures, is this history of disease and healing more beautifully and comprehensively set forth, than in the story of our text, the healing of the man sick of the palsy. It shows us the Lord Jesus as the healer of soul and body.

A sick man is brought to the Savior, one of the many cases recorded in the gospels. His

bodily disease is visible to all eyes. He is sick of the palsy. There he lies on his bed of suffering, paralyzed in all his limbs, helpless, like a little child that must be lifted and carried. They take him to the Lord, simply and firmly believing, that He who can restore the sight of the blind, who maketh the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, will also have a mighty word of healing for this sick man. His disease was palsy. But this was only the outward, visible, bodily disease. There was still another disease, more deeply seated. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." And what does He see in the heart of the man sick with palsy? He sees sin, a "conscience seared as with a hot iron," guilt with all its anguish and agony. In that sick body there dwells a soul faint and sore with sin. And hovering between despair and hope that soul revolves the ancient prayer: "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness; but do thou in love to my soul deliver it from the pit of corruption; do thou cast all my sins behind thy back." The disease of his sin gave that poor man more trouble and distress than all the pains of his palsy. And the great Soul-Physician and Searcher of hearts, at whose feet this patient had been laid, at once goes to the root of the matter, when He says: "Thy sins." This is what ails him.

But what have his sins to do with his palsy, the disease of his soul with the disease of his body? No doubt, his bodily pain and distress softened and humbled him, led him to examine himself and to repent. But more than this. In his sore affliction he recognized a certain connection between his disease and his sin. Therefore his own heart longed for deliverance from sin, while those who carried him to Christ only thought of the healing of his body.

Those who are at home in their Bible know well enough, that there is a deeply-rooted connection between sin and all manner of evil in this present world. "The wages of sin is death." This is the fundamental statement of the Scriptures furnishing the key to thousands of dark problems and mysterious facts in this world of wretchedness and suffering. Wherever in the life of nations, in the history of families, in the experience of individuals, sickness and distress, evil and suffering appear, there we hear the solemn voice of rebuke from the righteous and holy God: "Wherefore doth a living man complain? A man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens. We have rebelled and have transgressed. Thou hast not pardoned." Thus the root and cause of all the misery of this world of sin is written in fiery letters, in

the word of the living God. Take away sin and that whole river of tears is dried up. But wherever sin remains its consequences continue. On many a human face and body the finger of God has written in legible characters the cause and origin of their particular disease. The prodigal son who had devoured his father's living with harlots, knew well enough the cause of his starvation and nakedness. When the drunkard's children go in rags, when his poor wife does not know where to find bread to satisfy their hunger, when he totters through the streets, a human wreck, unable to do solid honest work, we have, indeed, no difficulty in recognizing that divinely ordained nexus between sin and evil. When the young man who has ruined his health with carnal lust and lasciviousness languishes and withers in premature senility, a helpless and hopeless consumptive, we need not go far to seek the cause of all this wretchedness.

And yet, an earnest word of warning is needed in this connection. We have to be exceedingly cautious in applying this divine law of cause and effect, in the relation between sin and evil, to our fellow-men whose hearts and lives with their peculiar history and development are not known to us as they are to God. How many sins of hasty uncharitable judgment are committed where we ought to stand in silence and hold our peace! The tendency

to pass judgment in such cases, was very common among the Jews in the days of Jesus of Nazareth. But we know how strongly and directly it was rebuked and condemned by the Master. You remember the case of the man blind from his birth (John 9). There the disciples asked the Lord: "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered: "Neither hath this man sinned nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Here the Lord decidedly rejects the idea of a direct connection between the blindness of that man and a particular sin, either of his own or of his parents. A similar testimony is given by Christ in the case of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you Nay. . . . Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay."

But wherever we personally have to experience all manner of evil and bodily suffering, wherever He feeds us with wormwood and gives us water of gall to drink, we ought not to be slow to meditate and investigate concerning that nexus between sin and evil. Let each one search and try his own ways. Let each one complain of his own sins. For as

long as we are in the flesh the way of all suffering and disease is from the soul to the body. He that hath suffered in the flesh must examine and try himself. He will find sin and will cease from sin. Thus our bodily afflictions and sufferings become a wholesome discipline and abundant blessing for our souls. They reveal to us the innermost defects and diseases of the soul. The sick man becomes a penitent sinner. And certainly such searching and trying of our hearts and ways comes much easier on the sick-bed, in days of suffering, pain and humiliation than in the seasons of ease and prosperity when we are so ready to forget and neglect all wholesome discipline.

Such was the experience of the man sick with palsy. In his heart a deep and earnest desire was awakened to be delivered from his sin, a hope and expectation that the friend and physician of sinners, Jesus of Nazareth, would have some help and remedy for him. There was in him a certain faith, known to the Lord, who "saw their faith." True, it was, for the time, still a timid, silent kind of faith. The rule in God's kingdom is: I believe and therefore I have spoken. But there is no speech in this case. Nothing but shyness and silence. What a descent from the height of that roof, before hundreds of human eyes into the presence of those two eyes of Jesus that burn into the soul and light up its hidden depths! To those eyes the sick man now

raises his own in fervent supplication. A *Kyrie Eleison* without words! A faith which the Lord saw!

"Thy sins are forgiven thee." These are the words addrest by Jesus to the poor sufferer. Not, "be free from thy disease," as the multitude had expected to hear. But, "thy sins are forgiven." This was the proper word of healing in this case, the favorite word of the Savior of sinners, the medicine which He is most ready to prescribe, whenever the patient is ready to receive it and to bear it.

"Sin—forgiven!" What a commonplace it has become in the mouth of most men! We hear of it, we speak of it, as if it were the simplest and most natural thing in the world, as easy as when the mother wipes out a wrong figure on the slate of the child preparing its lesson. But if you seriously consider and ponder that word, it begins to grow and to expand before your eyes. It becomes the greatest and most wonderful and stupendous thing in heaven and earth. To forgive sin means undoubtedly, according to the testimony of Scripture, to blot it out, to subdue our iniquities, to cast them into the depths of the sea, so that they will never be remembered. They are not to be seen any more, not to speak any more, not to accuse us, not to disturb us, no longer to continue in their cancerous and destructive growth. But what

is sin, that is thus to be abolished and put out of sight? Is it not a history which no power of man can annul? A deed which can never be undone? It stretches upward into the very heavens, into the presence of God's holy countenance. It is done. The hand has been raised against Him. He has been struck. His holy majesty has been violated. It reaches down into the very root and essence of our being. It is done. The poison has entered. Who will remove it? It reaches into all the ramifications of our life-tree. It is part of our history, part of our life, grown into everything, bound up with everything, past, present and future. Here it is, and who will say, we are done with it, it is abolished, not to be counted in, at the great reckoning of our life? We may try to ignore it, to turn hastily over that unpleasant leaf in our life-history, so as not to be reminded of it. We may try to forget its stubborn fact in noisy merriment and pleasure, or under the toil and burden of hard work. In the silent hours of night, in the stillness of the sick-bed it will rise up before our eyes and force upon our lips the desperate outcry: "My sin is ever, ever before me." What a terrible word from which there is no escape! It clings to us as the shadow clings to our heels. We cannot get rid of it, whenever our conscience awakens. Look where you will, over the smiling meadow, the mighty sea, the starry firmament, the noisy

crowd of merry men, or into the eye of a faithful and beloved friend—" My sin is ever, ever, before me!" And now, all at once, it is abolished, forgiven, so that it shall never be remembered! How, in the world, is this possible? To straighten, with your finger, a tree that has grown crooked and has become a mighty trunk; to hold up with the hand the torrent that rushes from the ravine and sweeps everything before it; to put out, with the breath of your mouth, the raging fire that rushes through our streets, devouring house after house—all this is easier to do, than to forgive one single sin, to blot it out and abolish it.

The scribes and Pharisees were right in saying: "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" The powerful word that can achieve such wonders is with God alone. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. I, even I, and besides me there is no Savior." This is the divine medicine, well known and well tried for ages. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved." And His healing is forgiveness of sins. And yet, even all the power of Almighty God would never have been able to achieve the wonder of forgiving sins, in the face of His own holiness and justice, without the conquering love of the Mediator and Son of man, "in whom we have redemption

through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins. "Thou hast made me to serve [hast burdened me] with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." And because He hath poured out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors, has He, God's righteous servant, justified many and has borne their iniquities. This is the reward of His hard labor, the spoils of His bloody victory, that He, the crucified and risen Savior, can bring peace to the burdened conscience, that is, the consolation of forgiveness of sins.

And not only the medicine has He prescribed and prepared, the very spoon with which it is to be taken, the hand by which it is to be given, are provided by Him. The medicine may be in the sick-room. The patient may lie in close proximity to the precious cup, and yet he may languish and die. It must be given and must be taken if it is to be effective. There is nothing more intensely personal than forgiveness of sin. *Thy* sins must be forgiven *thee*. Otherwise you have no forgiveness, no life, no salvation.

Consequently our faithful and merciful God embodies the whole precious gift of forgiveness in His word. It meets us in the gospel, thus it comes to us, comes into our hearts.

The glorious and most comforting power of this word He has committed to His Church. Wherever she places her font to baptize her infants into the name of the triune God, wherever she erects her pulpit to preach the gospel to the poor, wherever she sets the communion table with the " body of Christ, given for thee " and the " blood of the New Testament shed for thy sins "; wherever, in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ, she speaks the word of absolution to the penitent sinner, either in private or publicly, there she exercises the blesséd power of that word. The aim and end is always the same, to bring that powerful word home to every individual, to thee, to me, to make us taste the goodness of the Lord, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. You need not wait for dreams or visions or feelings, to be assured of this consolation. This blesséd word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, in thine ears, in thy heart. Though spoken through the mouth of weak and sinful men it is and abides the true and valid word of the living God. He speaks and it is done. He commands, and it stands fast. The word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto He sends it.

Let us return to the man sick with palsy. The medicine had been given. He had taken

it. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so had this soul panted after the word which the Lord had now pronounced. There he could hear it and take it from the mouth of Him that is true: "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." And now, where is the effect of this word? Where is the healing wrought by this medicine? How the eyes of the multitude were fixt on the man to whom that word had been addrest! What has it effected? In the first place, there is no change whatever, visible to the outward, natural eye. There he lies on the same sick-bed, unable to move hand or foot. He is not stronger than before. Nothing can be seen to prove the validity of this word. It is quite natural, then, that the scribes should reason within themselves: "This is, indeed, easy to say. But who knows, what good it has done? Where is the proof? Who will believe in its efficacy?" Thus they may speak to whom the Savior's word had not been addrest, who have not tasted its blessedness. But ask the poor patient himself, to whom this medicine had been given. How does he feel about it? The Savior has said: "Be of good cheer. Thy sins are forgiven thee." And He has spoken this word with all the power and authority which He, God of God, Light of light, very God of very God, had to speak it. Thus at the dawn of creation the word went forth: "Let there be light." And there was light.

And if now the same mouth says: "Be of good cheer," he to whom this word was spoken, is of good cheer, for his sins are forgiven. It is a true and real act of God done to his soul. He knows it. Let others doubt it, if they please. His soul is jubilant: "This is most certainly true; I know in whom I have believed. I know what has been given to me. I have tasted the power of God in this blessed word, which has saved me from destruction. I am at peace with God. Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift."

But some may say: "Poor fellow, here you lie on your bed, a poor, sick, afflicted creature, how can you be of good cheer with all your palsy, all your pains?" "Yes," he answers, "I am, indeed, of good cheer, with all my pains. They may continue to burn and rack my limbs; nevertheless I am continually with Thee! 'Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.' Wilt Thou keep me on the sick-bed? I will. Wilt Thou still try me in the fiery furnace? I will. My Jesus, as Thou wilt. My Lord, Thy will be done!"

With the peace of forgiveness in the heart the whole character of his bodily affliction is changed. While before he felt himself forsaken, and every pain that pierced his body was as a messenger to summon him before the

judgment seat of the holy and righteous One, he now realizes even in his sufferings the hand of the Father of which it is written: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, and your chastisement afterward yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Thus he lies, quiet and content, healed from the worst, most dangerous sore, waiting for the hour of the Lord, when it will please Him to cure likewise his bodily disease, when He will command him to arise from his sick-bed and to go home a healthy man, with his strength and youth renewed. And tho he should have to wait days and weeks for that hour, yea, tho it should be delayed to the very end of this present life, tho only in death the word of deliverance would come: Arise, go home—all this cannot disturb or annul the healing which his soul received. He holds fast that precious consolation: Thy sins are forgiven thee.

Mark well this sick man at this particular stage of his history, between the first word of Christ which assures him of the forgiveness of his sins, and the second which makes him arise and go home. It is the very picture of our present life, provided we are Christians in-

deed. We go through this present life between those two mighty words of Christ, holding by faith the blessing of the first word: Thy sins are forgiven, and holding fast the hope of the second word: Arise and go home! This is, in fact, the whole art of the Christian's life, to cling to the peace of forgiveness with a believing heart and to wait in hopeful expectancy for the resurrection of the body. Of this Paul writes: "Our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven, whence also we wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to even subdue all things unto himself."

But the Lord, in this case, did not keep His patient waiting too long for His second word of mighty deliverance, which stands in such close connection with the first. For, when there is forgiveness of sin, there are also life and salvation. The forgiveness of sins and the resurrection of the body are forever linked together in the Christian creed. The Lord is the healer of the body as well as of the soul. From the healing of the soul, which faith alone could comprehend and grasp, He at once proceeds to the healing of the body visible to every human eye. "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then said he to the man sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go

unto thine house." This mighty word of the Savior, if we understand it correctly, has two addresses, the first of which is not always sufficiently emphasized. It was spoken, not only to the sick of the palsy, for his bodily healing, but also to the doubting, indignant scribes: "That ye may know." What the sick man knew in the faith of his heart, they were now to know by an outward, visible demonstration, so as to convince them of the actual fact, of the reality of the forgiveness which He had imparted. The visible efficacy of His second word, which they could not deny was to stop their mouths and put an end to their doubts as to the efficacy of His word of grace, which was manifest only to the receptive heart that believed it. It was to be "for a testimony unto them." The healing of the body was to demonstrate to them the reality of the healing of the soul. In His long-suffering and forbearance He had to reach these perverse hearts from the body to the soul, before He could help them, in proper divine order, from the soul to the body.

"When the multitude saw it they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men." This is the joyous, jubilant strain in which our gospel culminates. If we consider it in the full light of this whole gospel-story we must find in it the reflex of the double healing which Christ performed, in soul and body. But, at the same

time it contains a prophecy of deepest significance, which those multitudes were not yet able to realize at the time. We make bold to say: Such twofold power, to heal soul and body, to bring deliverance to the poor suffering human race in the name and in the power of Jesus, has God truly given unto men. For those who were commissioned and sent forth to preach forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, had also the power to say, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to the lame: "Rise up and walk." And tho such miraculous gifts were less abundant and prominent in the subsequent stages of the Church's history, she still is charged, by the power of her faith and her love, to heal the wounded, to wipe away the tears, to do the Good Samaritan's work in the hospital of this world. And with this commission she certainly has also retained the strength and ability to heal soul and body, if not directly and miraculously, still none the less effectively, by her ministrations of mercy.

The blessed fruits of the gospel are not limited to the souls of men to whom it brings the peace of God that passeth all understanding. It enters this world, which is diseased in soul and body, with the promise: "Behold, I make all things new." And wherever it unfolds its power and accomplishes its work, it brings deliverance from all manner of evil,

" whether it affect the body or soul, property or character." It lifts woman from the depth of degradation and places her by the side of man as a true companion, and helpmeet for him. It exalts and sanctifies family life, turning the home into a church of God whose inmates dwell together in peace and harmony. It breaks the chains of the bondman and saves him from the horrors of inhuman oppression and abuse. It opens the asylum for the aged, tottering to his grave, lonely and friendless. It offers its sheltering roof to the orphan, the blind, the deaf, the epileptic, the idiot. It follows the warrior into the bloody battle, and rescues and nurses the wounded and dying. It sends the faithful, untiring deaconess to the sick-bed, be it in the palace or in the hovel. There is no manner of suffering or distress over this wide world, for which it has not a pitying heart and a ministering hand. To feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to take in the stranger, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and the prisoner, such is the Church's ministry of mercy, healing both soul and body.

You may have seen that beautiful picture, found in many a Christian home, which represents Christ, the *Consolator.* There He stands, His hands stretched forth in benediction, surrounded by the weary and heavy laden whom He calls to Himself. There is the poor mother weeping over the corpse of

her darling in her arms; there the lonely widow, whose earthly staff is broken; there the slave with the clang of his chain; there the lame with his crutches, and other sufferers —a picture of the great hospital of this world, in its center the Physician and Savior for soul and body, with His kind invitation: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden."

Such is Jesus, the Physician for all our diseases, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Do you know Him? Have you tasted His goodness? Have you received His grace in the forgiveness of your sins? At this point your healing must commence. Then He will make all things new, even in your case, in His own good time. If, through Him, you have found a gracious God, you have the one thing most necessary to man, the earnest of future glory, the spirit of adoption. Tho darkness may still surround you, tho you be weighed down by bodily affliction, "thy sins are forgiven thee." This is your medicine. On this you live. In its strength you struggle on, and suffer and are assured of final victory.

STALKER

IN THE MOUNT AND ON THE PLAIN

JAMES STALKER

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IN THE MOUNT AND ON THE PLAIN

Prof. James Stalker, D.D.

"And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount."—Exod. 25 : 40.

It is frequently related of Moses that he went up from the plain on which the thousands of Israel were assembled and hid himself in the solitudes of Mount Sinai. Down below, he had on his shoulders the burden of a nation; to him every dispute which might occur in the utmost corner of the camp was brought; and he was fretted with a thousand cares. But the weight lifted off him as he climbed the steep and got out of sight; peace came to him in the lofty valleys where no human eye followed him; and there he held communion with God.

Jesus exactly repeated this ancient example. At night He would disappear from the multitudes by which He was surrounded and plunge into the solitudes of nature; or, rising up a great while before day, He would steal out of the company of His still sleeping disciples and climb to the mountain-top. Down below there were so many coming and going that He had not time even to eat; when He crossed from one side of the lake to an-

other, the people ran along the shore, to meet Him as He disembarked; they brought the sick and deformed from every quarter and laid them in the streets where He was to pass. But the mass of men do not climb mountains: they keep to the level ground and the beaten track; so that anyone who climbs gets the world up there to himself; and Jesus made constant use of this secret.

It is one of the advantages of living in the country that one is tempted to acquire this habit, the solitudes being always near at hand; and, no doubt, some who were born and brought up in the country can remember a mountain top or a hidden valley or a wood, where they used to ponder and to pray. Even now, when, in a holiday-time, you get away to the country, you naturally look for such a haunt; and even a single visit to such a solitude may leave in the memory a lifelong fragrance. I remember a day thus spent, on the top of a hill that rises behind Inveraray: in front, as far as the eye could reach, stretched Lochfyne, shining like a silver mirror; one could see the people in the streets of the town below, moving about like ants; but, up above, there was a silence that could be felt, and the vast arch of heaven was over all.

But what are we to do for solitude in the city? Well, if the solitude of space is denied us, we can at least obtain the solitude of time. There is the night-time: wakefulness may, in-

deed, be a morbid condition, and then it is one of the most formidable of terrors; but there is a delightful wakefulness, when the mind reverts to its favorite ideas—when:

> I do thee upon my bed
> Remember with delight,
> And when on thee I meditate
> In watches of the night.

Then, there is the Sabbath: what Mount Sinai was to the wilderness round about it for Moses or what Mount Tabor was to the plateau of Galilee round about it for Jesus, that may the Lord's Day be to the remainder of the week for us. And so, in particular, is a communion Sabbath a solitude of time—a mountain-top of the spirit, to which we are invited to ascend; and in the deep silence amidst which the bread and the wine are circulating, the individual may be almost rapt out of the body. Indeed, at any time prayer is a sort of solitude; it has been called a passing out of time into eternity; were it even in the busy street that prayer were offered, we have, for the time, left the world behind us and are on the mountain-top, alone with God.

These are only slight hints as to the cultivation of a habit, without which there will never be any richness of experience or any depth of character.

When He was on the mountain-top, Moses saw visions. The special vision referred to in

the text is that of the tabernacle, the pattern of which was shown to him up there. Some have thought that, as on the screen of a magic-lantern, God caused a model of the tabernacle in its completeness to stand out, against the cloud of the morning or on the mist of the evening, before his bodily eyes; but, I incline to think, the vision was internal. The narrative speaks as if God described the structure, point after point, by word of mouth; but I should not wonder if this is only a way of stating that the mind of Moses worked out the design under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. At any rate, you may depend upon it, Moses was not passive, whilst it was shown to him: on the contrary, his mind was intensely active, enjoying all the excitement of invention and discovery.

Do you know this joy of thinking—what it is, in solitude, to work out a design in your mind, selecting this and rejecting that, adding part to part, adapting means to ends, until the pattern, whole and perfect, stands visible before the mind's eye? Thus the shipbuilder sees in his brain the image of the ship, before it is built; thus the general sees the plan of the campaign, before a blow is struck; thus the composer hears the oratorio, before the score is written. I have read somewhere that George Stephenson, when he had any great design on hand or any stupendous difficulty to solve, used to go to bed, not to sleep, but to

be absolutely sequestered, till he had thought it out to the end.

There are more important things, however, the pattern of which may be presented to the mind in the mount. One of these is character. The most important question about every one of us is, what sort of man he is to be. Our time on earth is mainly given us to ripen character; and year by year our character is assuming the shape which it will retain forever. When it is completed, what will it be? A failure, or a success? Sometimes this question comes to a man in the mount, and he sees the image of what he ought to be so clearly that it inspires and guides him for the rest of his life. Happy if the ideal which he sees is the character of Christ. There is the pattern, blinding in its majesty, dazzling in its purity, but captivating and irresistible, and I cannot help choosing as my goal the imitation of Christ.

Another thing of which the pattern may be seen in the mount is one's life-work. In the hours of solitude and reflection a man says to himself: I am sent into this world for a few years; I have received from my Maker certain abilities and opportunities; what am I going to make of them? is the world to be any the better of my being in it? When all is over and I appear before the judgment-seat, how shall I answer for the trust committed to me? And then there may rise before the mental

vision the pattern of what he would like to do in the world, and he comes down from the mount inspired with a purpose, which may thenceforward be his guiding-star.

No reflections are more worthy than these of a rational being. Have they ever, in any form, come to you? Have you ever, for example, had any vision of what you would like to do for others? Do you feel how mean it would be to live only for yourself? Have you ever felt a throb of ambition to do something for the land of your birth, or the city of which you are an inhabitant, or the church with which you are connected? Not long ago I chanced to go into the library of a college principal, and I found his room littered with circulars which he was sending out for the means to extend, on a large scale, the institution of which he is the honored head. He told me that one of the first circulars he sent out was to a gentleman he had never seen nor with whom he had ever had any communication, but whom he knew to be a native of the town. By return of post he received from him a check for twenty thousand pounds, accompanied with a kind letter, in which the donor stated that he remembered, one Sunday, as a boy sitting in one of the churches of the place beside his widowed mother, when a sermon was preached on Joseph, and what he did to save the famine-stricken Egyptians and to bless the land of Egypt, and the preacher

took occasion to speak of patriotism and public spirit, and said, there might at that moment be listening to him a boy who would, one day, have the means of blessing his native city or country. That kindled a wish which had remained with him all his life; and the receipt of the circular had shown him how it could be fulfilled.

The pattern seen by Moses in the mount was an ideal; it had no existence except in his brain; but he was sent back to the plain beneath to convert it into reality.

This was no easy business. There were endless things to be procured, without which no tabernacle could be constructed. Here are a few of them, enumerated in the chapter from which our text is taken: "gold and silver and brass; and blue and purple and scarlet; and fine linen and goats' hair; and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins; and shittim-wood; oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for sweet incense; onyx stones and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate." Why, it sounds like the catalog of a bazaar. Moses did not possess these things himself; they were in the hands of the people, especially of the rich and noble amongst them; and, before these would part with them, their minds had to be impregnated with his ideas and inspired with his enthusiasm. Then, when the materials had been procured, they had to be fashioned into the different ar-

ticles required; and for this the necessary skill had to be obtained. Bezaleel, the son of Uri, had to be discovered and Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, brought out of his obscurity. But Moses was equal to the occasion. The tabernacle was soon the talk of the entire camp; an enormous collection of materials took place, the nobles coming forward with such liberality that Moses had to tell them to stop; and the brains and the hands of the wise-hearted wrought without ceasing, till, down there on the plain, in actual, tangible reality, the structure stood which had once been only a vision of the brain on the top of the mount.

It is no easy matter to get the ideal translated into reality. Yet, till it is so translated, it is nothing; it is only a dream, only a castle in the air. As it is said that the way to hell is paved with good intentions, so there is no brain without its ideals, but the question to be asked about everyone is, what he is doing to make his ideals real? Without this, ideals only deceive, producing a consciousness of virtue which is only an illusion. You must bring your vision down from the mount and build it on the plain, where it can be seen and handled.

This is always laborious work, with many obstacles to encounter from without and hindrances from within. When John Bright was sitting in a stupor of grief, mourning for his dead wife, Richard Cobden came to him and

tenderly condoled with him. But, after doing so, he, endeavoring to turn his thoughts away from himself and, reminding him of what tens of thousands were suffering from the cruel incidence of the corn laws, invited him to come away and devote his life to the abolition of this public wrong. A cause well fitted to stir a generous mind! and forth the two champions went. But for many a year the work involved fatigue, obloquy, persecution; it meant forming associations, raising money, attending committees, cajoling lukewarm sympathizers, associating with the crackbrained and the impracticable. Such sordid details attend the realization of every great idea. We talk with emotion about the poor, and everyone admires work done for them. But what is such work, when you look close? It is leaving our comfortable homes, encountering smells, risking infection, and performing a hundred mean and nameless services. How unlike the ideal on the mountain-top, which is so beautiful and perfect! Yet the reality is a thousand times preferable for one reason, namely, that it is reality.

Still more dangerous, however, are the hindrances that come from within. "Look that thou make them after the pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount." He was not to forget what he had been shown, and he was not to take it upon him to introduce alterations. Many a life begins well; the man

knows what it is to be on the mount with God; he has seen the vision and felt the thrill of the ideal. But he forgets, and he modifies his ideal, when he finds how different it is as expected from him by the world. Passion overpowers him, or worldliness carries him away, or the love of money masters him; and the vision of his early days survives in his memory only as a pain and a reproach.

Such is the history of many a life; how may we prevent it from being ours? I know of no other remedy but this—to be often in the mount, there to reinspect the pattern and correct our impressions, to revive our enthusiasm and renew our resolutions. Jealously guard your Sabbaths from interruption; make your communion-seasons events that will be remembered; and cultivate the habit of ejaculatory prayer.

That vision of Moses was a noble one—a house in which Jehovah might dwell amongst His people—and, when it was converted into a reality, it was fair to see. But where is it now? Dust and ashes; ages ago swept into the lumber-room of forgetfulness. Not so our ideal, if it be made real; it will endure when the sun is old and the stars are cold. Why? Because it is the temple of the Holy Ghost; "for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

STRONG

THE HOLY SPIRIT THE ONE AND ONLY POWER IN MISSIONS

AUGUSTUS HOPKINS STRONG

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THE HOLY SPIRIT THE ONE AND ONLY POWER IN MISSIONS

PRES. AUGUSTUS H. STRONG, D.D., LL.D.

"*The power of the Holy Ghost.*"—Rom. 15 : 13.

WHO is the Holy Spirit? He is the third person of the blessed Trinity. In opposition to much of the false and pernicious teaching of our day, I emphasize the truth that the Holy Spirit is a person, not an influence—some One, and not some thing. I do not need to tell you that the tripersonality of the divine nature is essential to the life, communion, and blessedness of God. Because God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, He is independent of creation; He does not need the universe. The world has had a beginning; it is the work of His sovereignty and grace, but the Holy Spirit is eternal, and before the world was He existed, coequal with the Father and the Son. He is not only a person, but He is that person of the Godhead who comes nearest to us in our needs, who brings the Creator not only to, but into, the creature. He is personal love in its tenderest form, and only when we appreciate the depths of our own ingratitude and His holy shrinking from our sin, can we understand "the

love of the Spirit " that bears with our manifold provocations and still persists in His healing and purifying work. As Christ in Gethsemane " began to be sorrowful and very troubled," so the Holy Spirit is sorrowful and very troubled, at the ignoring, despising, resisting of His work, on the part of those whom He is trying to rescue from sin and to lead out into the activities of the Christian life. Multiply this experience by millions, and conceive how great must be the suffering and sorrow of the third person of the Trinity, as He struggles with the apathy and unbelief of the Church, endeavors to replace the spirit of selfishness by the spirit of missions, and strives to turn the weakness of His people into power!

But tho the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, He is more than this; He is also the Spirit of the incarnate Christ. We cannot understand this without reflecting upon the nature of the change in Christ Himself when He took upon Him human flesh. Before His incarnation He was the eternal Word of God, the Revealer of God in nature and in history. But when He was born of a virgin, He condensed His glory, so to speak, and manifested Himself within the limits of humanity. What was before abstract and far away now became concrete and near. In Christ we see the Godhead in our own likeness, speaking to us with a brother's voice

and feeling for us with a brother's heart. Christ is now Son of man as well as Son of God. And what I wish to say with regard to the Holy Spirit, is, that He is the Spirit, not of the preincarnate but of the incarnate Christ, with just as much more power than He had before as Christ had more power after His incarnation.

The Holy Spirit had wrought in some measure before the incarnation, just as Christ had wrought. But as Christ the Word of God, was abstract and hard to recognize so the Spirit of Christ partook of the same disabilities. The Holy Spirit, who always manifested Christ, could in Old Testament times manifest only the divine side of Christ, because there was as yet no human side to manifest. But when Christ's person had become complete by taking humanity into its divinity and when Christ's work had become complete by taking all our sins and penalties and bearing them for us, then the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, had more to manifest than He ever had before. From being the Spirit of God alone, He became the Spirit of the God-man, the Spirit of the incarnate Jesus, the revealer through all space and time of the humanity that had been taken up into the divinity.

We can understand now how it can be said in John's Gospel that before the crucifixion and resurrection "the Spirit was not yet

given ''—or was not yet—'' because Jesus was not yet glorified.'' The proper work of the Holy Spirit is to take of the things of Christ and show them to men. Until Christ's work was accomplished the Holy Spirit had comparatively little to show. Not only was His influence limited in its degree, but it was also limited in its kind: the Holy Spirit as the revealer of the incarnate Jesus did not as yet exist. We might illustrate this by the pride and joy of the mother in showing off her son: she can exhibit him after he has reached his majority and has education and character, as she never could when he was a babe in arms. One might even say that while she was caring for him in his infancy her time for showing him off had not yet come. The mother was not yet exhibitor. So the Holy Spirit could not exhibit Christ until there was a full-grown Christ to exhibit. While our Lord retained the form of a servant and was subject to the Holy Spirit here on earth, the Holy Spirit could not make Him known, any more than the mother could publish abroad the greatness of her son, before the time of his greatness had come. But when Christ's humiliation was ended and His exaltation had begun, then the Holy Spirit's work could begin also. Only when the Savior was glorified in heaven, could the Spirit glorify Him on earth.

But we must not separate the Spirit from

Christ as if the two were independent of each other like Peter and Paul. The persons are one in essence. As the Father dwells in and reveals Himself through the Son, so the Son dwells in and reveals through the Spirit. As Christ could say: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," so the Holy Spirit might say: "He that hath seen me hath seen Christ. In the Holy Spirit we have Christ Himself, no longer far away and unintelligible, but possest of a human soul and touched with the feeling of our infirmities as He could never be if He had not passed through the temptation and the sorrow of an actual human life. The Holy Spirit is the same incarnate Christ now made omnipresent and omnipotent. You can appreciate how great a truth this is, when you remember the sorrow of the disciples at the taking from them of their Lord. To part with Him, their Teacher and Helper, seemed to them to be the loss of all. How hard it was for them to realize that it was expedient for them that He should go away! Yet it was best for them to lose His visible, bodily presence, because only thus could they have His invisible, spiritual omnipresence. Unless He went away in body, He could not send His Spirit. But if He departed from their eyes, He could come into their hearts. Hence He can say indifferently, "I will send the Comforter," and "I will come unto you," for the Comforter is only

Christ in another, more spiritual, more universal form.

It was to educate the disciples to this faith in His invisible presence through the Holy Spirit that Jesus appeared to them so mysteriously in the upper chamber, on the way to Emmaus and by the seaside of Galilee. A moment ago He seemed absent, but now He is here, stretching out His hands in blessing. Has He come through the solid walls, or through the circumambient air? Ah, not so! The lesson to be learned is rather that He has been here all the while, and now He only manifests His presence. And the disciples do learn the lesson that, while seemingly absent, the Savior is ever present with them—while invisible, by the eye of faith He can be seen. The Holy Spirit is the incarnate Christ not only, but the incarnate Christ spiritualized, freed from all the limitations of space and time, no longer subject to the conditions of His humiliation, but omnipresent and glorified. While here on earth in human flesh He could heal the lepers and feed the hungry and raise the dead and walk the sea; but He could not be in two places at the same time, nor teach Peter in Galilee at the same time that He taught John at Jerusalem. Now, by His Holy Spirit, He can be present with the little knot of believers that worships in Swatow, at the same time that He meets with us here in America. And as the Holy Spirit is the omnipresent

Christ, so He is the omnipotent Christ also, with every restraint upon His working removed, except the restraints of infinite wisdom and infinite love.

We begin to see the greatness of the Holy Spirit. And yet we shall not understand how great He is, unless we remember how great this Christ is who works through Him. Jesus said that all power was committed to Him in heaven and in earth. This means nothing less than that nature, with all her elements and laws, is under His control and manifests His will; that history, with all her vicissitudes, including the rise and fall of empires and civilizations is the working out of His plan; and that the Church, with her witnessing for the truth, her martyrdoms, her love and anguish for men's souls, her struggling after righteousness, is the engine by which He is setting up His kingdom. The incarnate Christ is now on the throne of the universe, and the hand that was nailed to the cross now holds the scepter over all.

Who, then, is the Holy Spirit? He is the incarnate and divine Redeemer wielding all this infinite power, in the realm of spirit, and for spiritual ends. He is the organ of internal revelation, as Christ is the organ of external revelation. Just so far as Christ does anything for intelligent and moral beings He does it through the Holy Spirit. We can make no exceptions. As the Spirit of God in

the beginning brooded over chaos and brought forth forms of life and beauty, so still He works in nature to complete and restore the creation which sin has marred; as He strove with men before the flood, so He strives with them all along the course of time, in every nation and in every conscience giving witness of Christ's law and grace; as with Noah and Abraham and Moses and David and Isaiah He renewed the heart by presenting the truth made known by the preincarnate Logos, so now He takes the clearer truth of Christ's incarnation and sacrifice and resurrection and makes it the means of establishing the kingdom of God in human hearts. Pentecost could come only after the Passover. The feast of jubilation and first fruits dated back to the other feast when the lamb was slain in every household. So Christ had first to die, before the Holy Spirit could show to John on Patmos the Lamb that had been slain, sitting upon the very throne of God and with all the crowns of the universe upon His brow. In other words, the Holy Spirit is the divine but incarnate Savior omnipresent and omnipotent to subdue to Himself the hearts of earth's revolted millions and to go forth conquering and to conquer until every spiritual enemy has been put beneath His feet.

If what I have said is true, then I think we shall be obliged greatly to enlarge our ordinary conceptions of the power of the Holy

Ghost. I think we cannot confine it, as we sometimes do, to the power exerted in the conversion of the individual, tho that is its most common and impressive exhibition. There is a larger agency of the Spirit in the leavening of society, the shaping of public opinion, the raising of ethical standards, the quickening of the moral sense throughout whole communities and decades, throughout whole nations and ages. Just as there is a preliminary work in the individual which prepares the way for his regeneration so there is a preliminary work in the masses of mankind that prepares the way for the coming of the kingdom; and this preliminary work is the work of the Holy Spirit, just as much as the work of consummation is.

There are times when financial depression is succeeded by a strange awe and expectation of the coming of God. There are times when the sudden solution of vexed problems of State, when great public deliverances and great public judgments, are recognized even by ungodly men as due to the finger of God. Then it is the Holy Spirit that draws the curtain aside and lets men see the living God behind the wheels. In the movements and enterprises of the Church there is a work of the Holy Spirit quite aside from His enlightening and sanctifying of individuals. At times a multitude of believers, widely separated from each other, seemed moved to pray for

the removal of some mountain-like obstacle that prevents the progress of God's cause. Then slavery is abolished, walls of heathen exclusion are broken down, civil reforms are instituted, great revivals of religion and great missionary efforts are inaugurated. And yet it is true that even these broad and general influences upon the heart of humanity and of the Church are connected with renewals of single individuals, like the conversion of Paul and the conversion of Luther; and these turnings of individuals become the means of turning whole communities.

Regeneration is a spiritual work, in the sense that it takes place in man's spiritual nature, is wrought by a spiritual Being, and makes use of spiritual means and agencies. The Holy Spirit changes men's natures by bringing truth to bear upon them—the truth with regard to their sin, with regard to Christ's salvation, with regard to God's judgment. He convinces of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. As a flash of lightning shows the nightly wanderer that he is on the edge of a precipice when before he thought himself safe, so the Holy Spirit lights up all the heart's ungodliness and reveals its danger. As the rising sun discloses the glories of an Alpine landscape which the darkness has hidden and shows snowy mountain and deep blue lake in all their beauty, so the Holy Spirit draws aside the veil of unbelief and

enables the lost and helpless to perceive the divine compassion and the infinite sufficiency of Jesus Christ, the Savior of sinners. And then He convinces of judgment also—the certainty and awfulness of God's judgment against sin; the Holy Spirit teaches this, and enables the sinner to renounce sin utterly and thus to make the judgment of God his own.

So, while Christ is the life, the Holy Spirit is the life-giver. The Holy Spirit presents Christ to the soul, or, if you prefer the phrase, in and through the Holy Spirit, Christ comes to the soul and takes up His abode in it, makes it holy, gives it new views of truth and new power of will. Before the Holy Spirit began His work Christ was outside, and we looked upon Him as a foreign, perhaps even as a distant, Redeemer. After the Holy Spirit has done His work, we have Christ within, the soul of our soul and the life of our life. A union is established between Christ and us, so that none can separate us from Him or from His love. In fact, there is nothing more marked in the New Testament than the way in which He is identified with His body, the Church, unless it is the way in which the Holy Spirit is identified with our spirit. The Holy Spirit so passes into our spirits that we are said to have the spirit of Christ, and it is sometimes difficult to tell whether our spirit or the divine Spirit is meant, the two are so merged the one in the other. All this renew-

ing and transforming shows what power the Holy Spirit exercises. It is power compared with which the mightiest physical changes sink into insignificance. You can more easily create a world than recreate a soul. Only God can regenerate. It is only God, who causes the light to shine out of darkness at the beginning, who can shed abroad in a sinful soul the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And yet physical images are employed to illustrate the Holy Spirit's power. His agency is compared to that of air, of water, and of fire, at their highest pitch of efficiency. Take the air, that is often so still and apparently impotent about us that we absolutely forget its existence. Would you believe that this air, when stirred, is capable of taking up cattle and carrying them half a mile over fences and trees? Would you believe that this air could absolutely prostrate the strongest houses, and even lay low the largest trees, cutting a clear swath for miles and miles through the forest? Yet the eastern tornado or the western cyclone is nothing but "wild air," as Helen Keller beautifully said. So in the ordinary quiet workings of the Holy Spirit, we get no idea of the mighty effects He is able to produce. The same divine Agent who comforts the sorrowing and speaks in whispers of peace to the heart of a child is able to come like a mighty rushing wind at

Pentecost and in a single day convert three thousand unto God.

The agency of the Holy Spirit is compared to that of water. The rain is a symbol of His influence. Sometimes it is the gentle showers that water the mown grass and cause the thirsty field to revive. So the Holy Spirit encourages the believer whose earthly hopes have been cut down. But there are larger manifestations of His power. In this country and latitude we know little of what rain can accomplish. Years ago I was traveling in Palestine and happened to be caught in the last rain of the springtime, just before the long dry season from April to November set in. I had heard of rain coming down in the tropics in sheets and bucketsful, but I had never expected to see anything like it But there, on the way from Carmel to Cæsarea, I had the experience. The water seemed to descend in masses. Those exposed to it were drenched as if they had been plunged into the sea. Then I understood what the psalmist meant by " the river of God which is full of water ": he meant the rain, that came down like floods from heaven. And then I understood the promise of Malachi: " Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, so that there shall not be room to receive it." The opening of the windows of

heaven is an allusion to the deluge of old; and the prophet assures us that, when God's people are faithful and put His promise to the test, the Holy Spirit whose ordinary influences are so gentle will descend like the floods of Noah, so that the fountains of the great deep are broken up, and rivers of blessing flow forth from God's sanctuary, to water the earth.

The agency of the Holy Spirit is compared to fire. The flame kindled in the heart by the blesséd Spirit may be so slight and low that a single breath of coldness and opposition may suffice to quench it. But it may also become a consuming blaze that carries everything before it. It is only a match that sets the dry wood burning in the hunter's campfire, but that fire may spread till the whole forest for miles and miles is swept by the roaring flames. A kerosene lamp overturned is a little thing, but Chicago devoured by conflagration is the result—the greatest structures of wood and iron melt and crumble in that heat. So in the common operations of the Holy Spirit we get no conception of what the Spirit can do in melting hard hearts and in bringing to nothing the pride and opposition of men. How often has He swept whole communities with religious anxiety and zeal that could only be compared with fire from heaven! The college revivals, and the great awakenings on a larger scale which this coun-

try has witnessed in days gone by, are evidence that the Holy Spirit has a power beyond all our ordinary estimates. Why should we be so slow to believe in His power?

Was Pentecost the limit of His working? What was Pentecost but the feast of first-fruits, the bringing in of the first few ripened ears of the mighty harvest? Shall we limit the harvest by the first fruits, or think that the first ingathering is the greatest possible? Ah, no! Pentecost was but the beginning and the power of the Spirit of God will be fully seen only when a nation is born in a day.

There is no measure of the Holy Spirit's power except the greatness of the Holy Spirit Himself. The Holy Spirit is as great as Christ—in fact, He is Christ, not now absent but present, with us and with His Church alway even unto the end of the world, and all things in heaven and earth are given into His hand. And since Christ is God revealed, deity manifested, divinity brought down to our comprehension and engaged in the work of our salvation, the Holy Spirit is this same God in the hearts of believers and pushing the conquests of Christ's kingdom in the world. Wherever God is by His omnipresence, there the Holy Spirit is, to make men will and do according to His will, and whatever God can do by His omnipotence in the spirits of men, that the Holy Spirit can do, to convert the world to Christ. Is the Holy Spirit equal to

the work of missions? Ah, the Holy Spirit is God Himself, engaged in this very work. More pervasive than electricity or magnetism, His power encircles the globe, and hence the touch of prayer in America can produce results in Africa or in Japan.

He is one, and He is almighty. He can weave together all the prayers and all the labors of the Christian Church into the complex structure of His kingdom, and He can make the least breath of desire, and the widow's mite of contribution, most potent agencies for the salvation of the world. All the wealth of Christendom is His, and He can prompt His people to use it. The storms of war and the oppositions of the nations are only surface movements of the great sea of humanity, beneath which the vast ocean of God's Spirit is ever resting and waiting with power to bring the waves to calm or to drive them with one consent to engulf and overwhelm the shore. And the day shall come when, in answer to His people's prayers and through their very efforts, this ocean-like Spirit shall show His power and the work of a thousand years shall be done in one day. Men may fail and be discouraged, but the mighty Spirit of God shall not fail nor be discouraged, till He has set judgment in the earth, and the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

"It is the mistake and disaster of the Christian world that effects are sought instead of causes." These weighty words of a recent writer have deeply imprest me. I wish to apply them to the subject of missions. The Holy Spirit is the one and only power in missions, and to expect success in missions while we ignore the Holy Spirit, is to look for an effect without a cause. How evident it is that this great agent, this renewer of hearts, this regenerator of the world, has been largely neglected and ignored! We have been trying to carry on missions without the Spirit of missions. We have trusted our own wisdom, instead of trusting Him. We have invoked earthly helps, instead of invoking the Helper, the Advocate, who has been called to this work by God. And so our zeal has slackened, and our faith has grown weak, and our love has become cold. Neither faith nor love will survive, if hope does not go with them. We cannot do this work ourselves, and when we lose sight of the Holy Spirit, Christian activity dwindles and dies.

The success of missions is dependent upon our recognition of the Spirit of missions. The conversion of the world must be preceded by new faith in Him who effects conversion. The Holy Spirit will show His greatest power only when the Church seeks His power. The Spirit of missions is also the Spirit of prayer. How may we secure the power of the Holy

Spirit in missions and in prayer? Ah, we cannot pray that He will take to Himself His great power and reign supreme in the world, until we ourselves admit Him to complete dominion in our hearts and lives. So long as we are full of other things that He abhors —our own selfish plans, our impure desires, our worldly ambitions—He will not work in us that mighty praying, that mighty effort, that mighty sacrifice, that alone will save the world. You might put a corked bottle under Niagara, but you could never fill it. The flood of spiritual influence may be descending like Niagara, but the love of sin may completely prevent it from entering our souls. Let us open our hearts then that we may receive. Let us put away the evil that offends God and prevents Him from doing His work in us. Let us ask for His coming and indwelling. Let us take Him, by the act of our wills, once more to be our Lord.

On his last birthday but one, Livingstone wrote: "My Jesus, my King, my Life, my All, I again dedicate my whole self to Thee!" No wonder that he died on his knees, with his face buried in his hands, praying for the regeneration of Africa. The Spirit of missions is also the Spirit of consecration. He prompts to various kinds of service. He puts it into the heart of one to say: "Here am I, send me!" He moves another to say: "The half of my goods I give, to send the gospel across

the sea!" He impels still another to spend days and nights in prayer for the conversion of Madras, or for the spiritual revolutionizing of New York.

We are responsible for the bringing of the world to God, because we have this connection and partnership with the Spirit of God. It is not so much a question of giving as it is a question of receiving.

The Savior even now utters His command as He did in the company of those disciples on the evening of His resurrection. "Receive ye—take ye—the Holy Ghost!" He says to each one of us. But we make two mistakes with regard to His words. First, they are a command, and not a mere permission; and secondly, it is not a passive receiving, but an active taking that is required of us. Shall we thus take the Holy Spirit—the Spirit of missions, the Spirit of power? May God the Father grant it! May Christ the Son bestow it! May the Holy Spirit Himself vouchsafe it! Then from us, tho of ourselves we are hard and dry as rocks in the desert, shall flow rivers of living water like that which sprang forth at the touch of Moses' rod! Then shall be set in motion divine influences which shall flow like ocean tides around the world, until every land shall be bathed in their flood and the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea!

STRONG

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

JOSIAH STRONG

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CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

JOSIAH STRONG, D.D.

"And he that sitteth on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new."—Rev. 21 : 5.

MEDIEVAL art represented God as sitting on the throne of the universe watching the movement of stars and of men; but the Master said, "My Father worketh hitherto." The Psalmist does not hesitate to write, "Jehovah is a man of war"; and if we were as bold as he, we might say that God is a working man. He is infinitely active, and the object of His activity is the ". . . one far-off divine event, to which the whole creation moves," or, exprest in Scriptural terms, "the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." We cannot imagine that, with such an object in view and with infinite resources at command, God has ever been idle for a moment. In every age of the world He might say, "Behold, I make all things new." But the results of the divine activity were far more obvious during the past century than ever before. Indeed, nothing was so characteristic of the nineteenth century as change. There

have been radical changes in the methods of agriculture, of manufacture, of commerce, of travel, and of communication, in the standard of living, in our homes, and in all the conditions of life. A single illustration from a single sphere must suffice. I am acquainted with an elderly lady of New York who has in her possession a journal something over a hundred years old which records the incidents of a voyage up the Hudson River from New York to Albany and return. The voyage up the river occupied nine days, the return seven days. Now, these sixteen days of this lady's journey would suffice for a trip from New York to Albany and return, plus one across the Atlantic to London, plus one across the Channel to the Continent, plus one across all Europe to Constantinople—so revolutionary have been the changes in the material world during the past century. And changes in the world of ideas have been scarcely less radical. They have invaded that sphere which is most sacred, even the religious. Many have become alarmed as if the very foundation of truth were being destroyed, and have exclaimed, "If the foundations be removed, what shall the righteous do?"

It is well for us to reassure ourselves with the words of the text, and remember that it is God who says, "Behold, *I* make all things new." He who created the world will never lose control of it, and He who loved us enough

to give His Son for our redemption, will never forget to love us. There have been revolutions in other ages, and before now men have sought to steady the ark of God. But the turnings and overturnings in the past have been but the revolutions of the divine chariot wheels bearing the world onward to the goal of God's benevolent purposes.

The revolutions of the past century in the material world have brought us a new civilization with new problems. The revolution in the world's thought has presented to us a new conception of Christianity. I desire to show that this new Christianity is marvelously adapted to solve the problems of the new civilization.

First, as to the new Christianity, I make haste to say that it is new only because it is so old, for we are simply getting back to the Christianity of Christ, and this return to Christ is due to a new method, known as the scientific method, which has created this revolution in the intellectual world, and which has so marvelously enriched the world with knowledge that it is quite safe to say that the greater part of all the world's knowledge today is less than one hundred years old. As to the old method, the philosopher went into his study and spun his theories out of his own brain, very much as the spider spins her web out of her own body; and if facts were produced inconsistent with the theory, so much

the worse for the facts. As to the new method, the investigator enters the field of truth which he proposes to investigate, and gathers together all possible facts bearing upon the subject of inquiry. These facts he is very careful to verify, and then he finds the theory that will best interpret, explain, and harmonize them all; and, if new facts are adduced inconsistent with the theory, so much the worse for the theory. That is the difference between the old method and the new. The one is precisely the reverse of the other. You will recall that the Westminster divines, men good and great, toiled for years—I think it was seven years—in perfecting their system of theology, fashioning their creed, making it logical and self-consistent, and then, when their theory or their system of doctrine was rounded out and completed, they appointed a committee to find proof-texts. That is the old method. Now a student of Scriptural truth, when he proposes to investigate a given subject, goes to the Word. He finds all the passages bearing upon that particular subject. He makes sure that he reads them correctly and that he interprets aright the mind of the Spirit, and then he fashions the doctrine so as best to harmonize with them all. The old method honored logic; the new method honors truth. We go back from theologians and back from commentators to the gospels, and in the gospels we find Christ Himself.

That is the new method, and that method has given us the new Christianity which, as I said, is new only because it is nineteen centuries old.

By that method there has been a re-discovery of profound importance. The Church to-day has re-discovered the kingdom of God, and I imagine that that will signify more to the world than Columbus' discovery of the new continent. As we ask, "What was the message of Jesus to the world?" we find that the first word was identical with the message of John the Baptist: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." We read that Jesus went about throughout all the cities and villages of Galilee healing the sick, curing all manner of disease and preaching everywhere the gospel of the kingdom. That was the subject of His great inaugural message, the Sermon on the Mount. We do not understand that sermon unless we know its subject. He tells us there the conditions of entrance into that kingdom; He explains the laws of that kingdom. He is very careful to say that He is not setting aside the prophets' conception of the kingdom; He has come to fulfil it. And He goes on to say what are the laws of the kingdom, and to show by one illustration or another how comprehensive are those laws, including not only our daily outward lives but the inner life of the spirit.

Jesus appointed His seventy disciples; what

for? To go out and preach the kingdom. He appointed the Twelve for the same purpose—to go forth and preach the gospel of the kingdom. And when they came to Him asking to be taught how to pray, after ascribing holiness to God, the very first petition was—and it is to be our daily petition, and if we are to pray for it daily we ought to work for it daily—"Thy kingdom come"; and the second petition was an interpretation of the first: "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Just so far and just so fast as God's will is done on earth as the angels do it, so far and so fast the kingdom will come, and so far there is heaven on earth. We find that the great body of Christ's teaching deals with the kingdom of God. Read again the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, and see how He there illustrates in various ways the laws of the kingdom and the method of its growth. "The kingdom of heaven is like," "It is like," "It is like." We are told in the first chapter of Acts what the Master did during the interval between His resurrection and His ascension. He discoursed with His disciples concerning the things of the kingdom; and finally when He passed beyond the sight of His wondering and worshiping disciples His last message—the great commission—was, "Go ye into all the world and preach to every people the gospel of the kingdom." It was absolutely the first word, it was abso-

lutely the last word, and it was the great body of His preaching. And yet the Church has forgotten the kingdom of God.

Until very recently the pulpit has had as little to say concerning the kingdom of God as Christ had to say concerning the Church, which He mentioned only twice; and the pulpit has as much to say concerning the Church as Christ had to say concerning the kingdom. These are two very different things. There has been a re-discovery of the kingdom of God.

Do not understand me to say that the teachings of Jesus concerning the individual relations of man to God are to be set aside or are insignificant. He taught the relations of man to God and the relations of man to his fellow. That was Christ's Christianity. We have neglected one for the other. If in the future we should neglect the first for the second, it would be a greater blunder than that of the past, for our relations to God must always be more fundamental than our relations to man can be. But why neglect either? "This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone." Christianity is two hemispheres. The Church has seen only one of them. Some men are disposed to see only the other. Why not put the two hemispheres together and let the sphere of truth roll on to the conquest of the world? That is what is being done to-day. Dr. Parkhurst of New

York says: " God and one man could make any other religion, but it takes God and two men to make Christianity." The pulpit, as I say, has forgotten that two men were necessary. It has talked of the relations of God to the individual soul, and it has dealt with the supreme command to love God supremely; but it has forgotten that the second great command, " Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," is simply the application of the same law to man in his manward relation, and that it has precisely the same origin and precisely the same sanctions as the other command. If one is binding, both are binding. If the Church is under obligations to teach the world the love of God, it is under like obligations to teach and to exemplify the love of our fellow-men. We have thought of Christianity, the teachings of Christ, as a circle drawn round the individual as its center. Hereafter we must think of Christianity, the teachings of Jesus, as an ellipse drawn round the individual and society as two foci. Jesus laid down certain social laws for the kingdom as a society, to which we shall have occasion to return later.

Secondly, let us consider very briefly the new problems and the new civilization, or better, I might say, the new problem, because we must consider the social problem as generic. It is really one problem—the problem of man is his relation to his fellow-men.

This new industrial civilization was created by the substitution of mechanical power for muscular power. Down to the nineteenth century the world's work was done by muscles, and while muscles were the power every man possessed his own. He could go apart by himself and do his work alone. Power was individualistic, and therefore industry was individualistic; therefore life and civilization were individualistic. But when the stationary steam engine became a source of power, men had to gather round it. That meant the factory; it meant the division of labor, it meant the organization of industry, it meant interdependence among men. That is to say, the steam engine de-individualized power and centralized it. It therefore de-individualized labor and organized it. It therefore de-individualized civilization and rendered it collective. And that is the new civilization, bringing its new problems vital to everyone.

Let me give a single illustration. I go back to my father and my mother, born in the beginning of the last century, who represented the old civilization. They were typical New Englanders. My father was a farmer. He could not only till his own soil but build his own house, make his own furniture, make his own tools and implements, for the most part, make his own musical instruments—and make them well. My mother could take the wool as it came from the back of the sheep and

dye it, and card it, and spin it, and weave it, and make it into a suit of clothes for her husband or her son. If there is a woman in London or New York who can do all that to-day, I venture to say that she is a very old woman. These accomplishments are not taught to-day in American colleges or in English colleges. That is to say, my father and mother between them knew ten or a dozen trades at least, and if they had been cast away on Alexander Selkirk's island, they could have reared a family of children in comfort independently of all the world, save for its luxuries; and in that they were typical. It was the age of homespun. Then each man or women knew several trades. Each could do fifty things. Now it takes fifty men to do one thing. Each one of those ten or a dozen trades is now represented by twenty, or forty, or sixty machines. They tell me that it takes sixty-four machines to make one shoe, and each one of the sixty-four operatives is dependent upon the other sixty-three for the finished product. Each operative knows, not five or six trades, but the one sixty-fourth part of one trade, and that measures his dependence upon others. And not only are all the men in one factory now dependent on each other, but different factories are dependent on each other. Here are the great allied industries. Strike out one of them and you paralyze them all. It is an entirely new condition of life, and it means an

absolutely new civilization with its absolutely new problems, and these are the problems of relationship—the relations of men to their fellow-men. These are not the most fundamental problems. The relation of the individual soul to God will always be the most fundamental; but the peculiar problem of our age is the relation of man to his fellows. That is the generic social problem.

In the age of homespun, life was simple; now it is complex. Then relationships were few, now they are many. Then the great problem was that of the individual; now the great problem is that of society. Then, industrially speaking, the family was a little world; now the world is rapidly becoming one great family. Then each life was independent, now we are discovering that "no man liveth unto himself and no man dieth unto himself." We are discovering that our separate lives are parts of one great life—the life of the social organism. Every living thing is governed fundamentally by vital laws. The great laws which govern society are not those enacted by Parliament. They are not the edicts issued by a czar. They are the vital laws which God Himself has implanted in nature and everything that lives.

I want to call attention very briefly to two vital laws, which are therefore laws of the great social order; and just as we, if we would enjoy physical health, must learn the vital

laws of the body and obey them, even so if we are to have social health, we must learn the vital laws of society and obey them. There is no other way. Here is a flower. Imagine, if you please, that it is a rose tree, with its roots, its stalk, its branches, its leaves, its blossoms. Each part is related to all the other parts. The root sustains the whole, and the stalk supports the bush. The bark transports the sap from the roots to the limbs, and the leaves are the lungs. The blossoms and its seeds reproduce the kind. That is to say, each part serves every other part. It is necessarily true in an organism that every organ is related to all the others; each serves the whole. The law of service is fundamental to every organism, whether vegetable or animal—wherever there is life.

There is another vital law of every organism. Scientists tell us that this marvelous body of ours has numberless little cells, each having a life of its own. These cells constitute muscles, tendons, bones, nerves, and blood-vessels. They tell us further that each cell has the power of feeding, of feeling, of moving, and of reproducing its kind. They tell us that we cannot work or play, or laugh, or cry, or lift our hand, or think, without its costing the lives of these little cells. There is a constant raveling and a constant knitting going on in this great web of life, and the raveling is the surrender of the lives of these

little cells to the great order. It is the law of sacrifice. You find sometimes that foreign cells, which refuse to obey this law of sacrifice, enter into the organism, and there multiply. Then we have typhoid fever, or diphtheria, or small-pox, or some other zymotic disease, and if these foreign cells multiply sufficiently, then we have physical anarchy which is death. It is only when the living cells in the body surrender themselves to the law of the body that we have life and health and power.

Now you and I are social cells in this great organism of society, and each of these cells has the power of feeding, of feeling, of moving, and of reproducing its kind, plus will power. Ah, that is where trouble comes in. The cells in the body have no will power; they cannot choose but obey the fundamental law, the vital law of sacrifice. But these social cells have power to obey or to disobey, hence social disease and suffering. We all believe in service, but we would rather that others should serve us. We all believe in sacrifice, but we would rather that others should sacrifice for us. There has been a deal of sacrifice in this world's history, but much of it has been compulsory—that made by the weak to the strong. How shall we be made to accept the laws of service and of sacrifice? How shall we consecrate our lives to the service of the great social organism? Buddhism has no

answer. Brahmanism has no answer. Confucianism is silent. Social science goes far enough to say that the only solution of the new problems is altruism, and points the way, but it has no power to make men walk in it. There is light, but there is no heat.

And precisely here we come to our third point, the adaptation of the Christianity of Jesus Christ to solve the great social problems. For Jesus laid down certain social laws of the kingdom of God, and that kingdom comes so far and so fast as those laws are obeyed. He said, " The Son of man is come not to be ministered unto, but to minister." He taught the law of service. " The servant is not above his master, nor the disciple above his Lord." " The Son of man came to minister." " I am among you as he that serveth." " And as the Father sent me into the world, so send I you into the world." This was not something incidental, it was exemplified in all His life and in all His teaching. It was binding on Him, it is binding on us. Service is a fundamental law of the kingdom of God.

Again He said, " The Son of man is come not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his life a ransom." And this law of sacrifice was not incidental, but fundamental; it was in all His teaching, and in all His life. It was exemplified in His death. And, moreover, He laid the law on every disciple. He

said, "If any man will come after me"—"any man." Ah! there is one of the great circles of truth which, like the great circles of the earth, embrace the world. That belongs to the twentieth century as well as to the first. It includes the rich, the poor, the old and the young—"any man." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself." We are apt here to lay the emphasis on the wrong word. We say, "If any man will come after me, let him *deny* himself." Self-denial is nothing peculiar to Christianity. No man succeeds in business or professional life or anywhere without denying himself in many respects. A man cannot even make a successful prize-fighter without denying himself. He denies the higher nature that its strength may flow into the lower, and he becomes simply a mighty animal. That is not Christianity—denying one part of oneself for another part. That is not what Christ meant. A man does not deny himself when he denies a fraction of himself. "If any man will come after me, let him deny *himself,* and take up his cross." What does that mean? We belittle the cross. We talk about "our crosses." A dear old lady, traveling in the compartment with me the other day, spoke of a physical infirmity and said that it was a great "cross." Anything that crosses our inclinations we call a cross. We say much about "crosses," but the Bible says nothing of

" crosses." The word does not occur in the plural. The Bible speaks only of the cross, and it means always one thing; it means death, nothing else, nothing less. You know well that when a man was condemned at a Roman tribunal, his cross was laid upon him and he bore it to the place of execution.

" If any man." That means you and me, whether your name is on the Church roll or not. " If any man will come after me, let him deny *himself,* and take up his cross and follow me—to Golgotha, whither I bear my cross." Read the context and you will see that Jesus was talking about saving and losing life. Paul knew what it meant. He declared that he had been crucified with Christ, so that he no longer lived, and the life that he lived in the flesh he lived by the faith of the Son of God. Our preaching of the cross has been superficial. The doctrine of sacrifice has almost been lost by the Church. But the re-discovery of the kingdom of God brings the cross before us. The doctrine of sacrifice is absolutely fundamental to the kingdom of God.

But there is one other law, if possible, even more fundamental, and that is the law of love, for it is the law of love which makes obedience to the other two possible. Love God supremely, love your neighbor as yourself, and to him who loves service is privilege and sacrifice is joy. Ask the mother who watches all

night by the bedside of her child burning with fever, Is it not a privilege to serve? Is it not a joy to give health and even life itself for the loved one? And not only does Jesus reveal the way; He Himself is the way. In Himself He has revealed a character that commands our supreme love. There is a power in the world which is to redeem the world, and remember it is the sacrificing power of the Church which gives it redemptive power. Do you not see that these fundamental laws of the kingdom of God fit modern conditions, corresponding to the fundamental laws of the social organism, as a glove fits to the hand? Is it not a new revelation of the divinity of our Lord that the Light of the first century is the Light of the twentieth century—the Light of the world?

Yes, in the light of this re-discovery of the kingdom of God history must be re-read, and the Scriptures must be re-studied, and theology must be re-reasoned, and the mission and the methods of the Church must be reconsidered, and industry must be reformed and society must be reorganized. The doctrine of the kingdom of God is the most thought-compelling, the most zeal-inspiring, the most world-transforming of all the great ideas of the last century, and it has "come to the kingdom for such a time as this."

I do not need to explain what is the kingdom of God. I do not need to tell you that

it is not the home of the blesséd dead, neither is it the visible nor the invisible Church. It is the social idea of heaven here in the earth.

I would draw a single inference—a large and obvious one—the duty of absolute consecration of ourselves to God for the service of man.

In this connection let me quote a few words from the diary of a young man in college, and I will commend it especially to young men and young women. They are the words of one whom the world delights to honor, Jonathan Edwards: "I have this day solemnly renewed my covenant and dedication. I have been before God, and have given myself and all that I am and have to God, so that I am not in any respect my own. I can challenge no right to myself, to this understanding, this will, these affections. I have no right to this body, this tongue, these hands, these feet; no right to these senses. I have given every power to God, so that for the future I will challenge no right for myself." Edwards needed to see only one step more—that that consecration to God meant service to his fellow-men. I know a lad who, when he was sixteen, came to his father one Sunday night and bade him good night, and as he did so said with a tremor in his voice, "Father, I have decided to live a Christian life." The father talked with him as to the meaning of a Christian life, and then they knelt together and

the lad's prayer was this: "Heavenly Father, help me to keep back no portion of the price, but to consecrate myself wholly to Thee and to remember that consecration to God means service to man."

Does absolute self-abnegation, the giving of self, body and soul, time and substance, to God for the service of man, seem like a root out of a dry ground that no one should desire it? It is rather like wondrous cathedral windows. Seen from without they are dull enough, meaningless enough. Enter, and from within, with the light of heaven streaming through them, they are filled with every beauty of form and color. The life of self-abnegation is dull enough, is meaningless enough, seen from without; but, brother man, enter, and from within, with the light of the cross of Christ streaming through it, you shall find it glorified with the beauty and blessedness of heaven itself, and this is heaven upon earth.

STRYKER

FRUITS OF FAITH

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FRUITS OF FAITH

PRES. M. W. STRYKER, D.D.

"The branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine."—John 15 : 4.

FAITH is that direct connection with God which vindicates spirit as the ultimate and substratal fact. It is biological as underlying all that is morphological. It unlocks all the riddle of the senses. Faith is that faculty of the soul in which it realizes its Maker.

The word is so frequent and constant in these Greek scriptures because its idea is so deep and broad. It utters a finality. It binds together all origin and end—all duty and all duties. It is preeminently the term, in the pregnant and transfigured vocabulary of the new covenant which most strains and glorifies the effort of language to say the open secret of the new life. Its searchlight pierces to the very source and method of moral certainty, and shines upon every realm of action. It intends that elemental capacity and vital attitude in which the three phrases of personal being are an undistributed unity. Thus its simplicity eludes further analysis. Its dimensions cannot be torn apart. It can be de-

scribed but not dissected. It is reducible to no lower term. It is spiritual life—foundation, article and process of proof, evidence, conviction.

This ontology is implied at least in the intense primacy of the verb in the first three words of Heb. 11: "Now faith is." What it is and does, follows close. The predicate, whose tightset and profound words cannot be fully translated, flashes out the great simplicity; but that faith is, is spatial. It is the classic and generic thesis of that inspiration, that passionate intuition, which grasps and holds fast the invisibilities of God. Under whatever details of feeling or event, faith is essentially this: "basis of things hoped for, demonstration of effects not now seen."

Then the resounding roll—citing no meager line of those who instanced this imperious conviction of Him who is within and behind the palpable and the audible! This explained them all, of this vital finality they experienced the inner results and wrought the outer. Their absolute commitment to God gave them the ultimate witness in their conscious relation. Warned and obeying they went out not knowing whither, saluted the announcements from afar, endured as seeing the unseen.

This communion with the real Presence, this reflex of the great Master and Companion, this substantiation of the indissoluble life and the powers of the age to come, is its own

assurance of that energy which transcends the optical and all the stages of the formal reason. Spirit to spirit, it knows its heredity and birthright in that order which is "not from phenomena." With Genesis and John it is set in the key of all reality: "In the beginning God!" This impulse to go back of change to cause, to recognize one unitary idea and will as authority and prophecy, is the soul's native sanity and outreaches all the "insubstantial pageant" of the temporal. It is no quasi-hypothesis but a valid "hypostasis"; a substructional understanding of the unseen and eternal—a filial instinct, seeking God as a baby's lips hunt the mother's breast! They who disdain this insight can deny it, but they who consent to its revelations know that they know. "They believe and are sure."

This paradox of soul and sense, this (mystical but not magical) expectancy toward the immanent and inevitable Person, "who filleth all in all," is that commitment to a faithful Creator, which "deeper and deeper sinks in light." This choosing not to refuse the self-evidencing of God makes the crucial experiment. "Willing to do His will," it learns

> "Meek obedience is light,
> And following that is finding Him."

Now Christian faith is this same faith, finding in the Christ a new encouragement and

enlargement. He is the great answer and confirmation. By the Father to Him, by Him to the Father! He is no "stranger" but the manifestation, to which all the deep things conform and by which they are illuminated. Faith sees the increasing result consonant with the dateless claim. Again Charles Wesley may lead the choir with that quaint and convincing stanza:

> "From all iniquity, from all,
> He shall my soul redeem;
> In Jesus I believe, and shall
> Believe myself to Him."

Therefore, "the life of Jesus manifest in our mortal bodies." Faith is resolutely transitive. It is not only an understanding, but an undertaking and a program. Its total activity is immediately reflected in certain traits which show that it is not an arbitrary opinion but a procreative choice. Sure of Him, it yields to the confidence that He is noble and constant; it is not cynical or despondent, but brave, ready, patient, persistent, quiet, glad. It offers its testimony (all it can do) to others —desiring that their hearts also may kindle and they too be "bound in the bundle of life." It steadily seeks contact with God. His secret is with it—which only He can impart. One may hear of God, but to hear God, one must speak and listen to God. Faith is intimacy with God!

The other two graces go with faith and without faith are impossible. To hope in God and to know real love, one must consent to God. It is this faith which upholds hope, so that the hideous loneliness of that possession which seeks only the cisterns of the visible cannot approach it. It is this substantive faith which ever goes out of itself in love, which as it more intensely yields to the " Author and Finisher " knows that thrill and beat of the heart which still is answer. To be with Him, to be like Him—this longing is the pledge of fulfilment.

> " Arrest the prisoner of Thy love,
> And shut me up in God."

Thus faith is whole, and sees sin as the ugly and only rift between the soul and its Lover—selfwill, upstart and insane! Thus it welcomes the forgiveness which restores truancy to a Father's arms, and, in mercy toward all like debtors, prays that Lord's prayer which many but recite.

Out of these, and like, divine inner tempers, this connection with the very Life of life, flow all the objective virtues. They do not go without saying, nor say without going. They are its natural necessary signs. Only from Him are the fruits found that make good His word by reproducing His Spirit and potency. It is His glory thus to be admired in them that believe. This fruit which He " comes

seeking,'' is the food of the world. It imparts what the Lord of hunger bestows, and the faith works its wonders anew. '' By this shall men know.'' The manifest guiding silences gainsaying, the actual evidences of Christianity are always alive. The stale manna of yesterday will not do. The *apologia* is but an excuse, if the works of Christ are not prolonged. There must be new woof on the old warp, for the Weaver's pattern is not yet complete. The memoriter of '' what some other told '' is incompetent. The great jury of the world exacts, and should exact, first-hand testimony.

The note and mark of all the unmistakable fruits of the Spirit is that, implicitly and explicitly, they are from and unto God. Logical opinion has its place, discursive reason is good (for one or two stories—it is a dangerous flying machine) ; but the finality of faith lodges in the will to do. Credence is not a vow to stop thinking (to stopper and seal its quart bottle of ideas)—but it is a vow not to stop from following the progress of God. It ever is leaving its '' low vaulted past ''; it confesses its pilgrim purpose and sings the '' song of degrees.'' It speaks the future perfect as the verification of the present. It is good so far as it goes inasmuch as it goes further. Every point is a way station. Of course right idea and right deed are indivisible. Doctrine and duty unite. But the larg-

est and strongest creed is very short: "I yield to God in Christ!" Preference between ideal and practise makes either absurd. A man's real belief is what he lives by. A philosophy that one cannot preach to the least and last man is a falsity—a preposterous juggling with abstractions, and behavior that one cannot relate to his deepest thinking is whim—" with no depth of earth." Seed and fruit answer each other. No root, no harvest. " The law of the spirit of life " is submission to God wrought out. Good faith, faithfulness, fidelity—this is an active relation. Trustfulness is trusteeship—a fiduciary life. " Put in trust of the gospel," said Paul, " as free," but not " free and easy." No antinomian trick there! Now the common law of a trust is, first, that it must be executed in its plain terms; and, second, that it may not be delegated to another. The shrewd steward was an example for his ingenuity and a warning for his infidelity. The flat heresy that delegated responsibility can become independent of its Creator; and may do what it will with what is not its own, reverses the law of principal and agent. It has present instance (not to be disagreeable about our own sins!) in the myopic impudence of the Russian lie, the effrontery of the cossacks of life insurance, and the arrogance of some United States Senators. " Wicked husbandmen " all!

"The good old rule
Sufficeth them—the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power
And they should keep who can."

"Now in what we are saying the principal thing is this"—that the fruits of the "tree of life" are fidelities. Others' behaviors may be marketed under an orthodox label, but they only grew on the tree of the knowledge of good and evil!

That prayer-book phrase—"the blesséd company of all faithful people"—well describes the true Church, the Church dynamical as distinguished from the Church statistical; the actual as other than the artificial! It is those whose credit toward God in Christ is verified by the logic of their life. The real Church thinks as it goes on, and is aware that all achievement at any date is but tenative, that no dictum or decree of fallible men has yet said the last word for God. The map of duty grows. The skies of truth deepen. The reaction upon systems of theology of democracy, for instance, or of the growing problems of human fellowship and partnership, are providential, however unwelcome to stalagmite theory. We are, by fact, forced upon a better reference to Him who was, and is, the "desire of nations"—upon a firmer interpretation and less hesitant application of the ever evolving and never exhausted Christianity of Christ. His promises must be

wrought out or we must give Him up! The syllogism is exacting. Religion is not alone daily commerce with God, it is the heart demanding the way, and never at peace with the mediocrity of present attainment, nor entangled with the worldly maxims which make Christ impossible, which consent to call Him Lord, but deny that He meant just what He said! But the subject must agree with the predicate, if the life is to parse. The real "body of divinity" is not a treatise in three volumes octavo, but is that company, however small, whose devotion cannot think straight and walk crooked! It does not dilute the prescription. It does not offer the stone of metaphysics, or the scorpion of controversy, but the "bread of life" to all hungry and haggard souls. Not propositions pasted or clamped together, but clasping hands—"first aid to the injured"—the "Red Cross Society"—Hotel Dieu! The saving remnant, the core, far within the Church apparent, is that Gideon band which has His mind who came "not to be served but to serve"—those who care more for figs than for fig-leaves, who pull rather than ride. To work the guns is more than merely to praise the flag!

By this token if the ostensible Church were rid of those who are but its attachés and barnacles it would be more ready to go into action. It needs the dry-dock!

Any corporate business must be appraised

by the ratio of its output to its capital. If the stock is "watered," down go the dividends. It is fair to ask whether the actual "King's business" alone nets a return justifying the investment; whether the facilities are matched by power, and the plant is vindicated in the product.

Perhaps if those who are only "in ballast" were detached from those deep-laden with the heavenly merchandise, the roll of the fleet would be cut in two. The cargo is the test. An army is no stronger than the number which "reports for duty."

If his grain field is to pay, the farmer must get rid of the quack-grass. I know that one may not root up all the tares; but he must see them, and must declare the day that will find them apart from the wheat! Compare the possible bearings of an actual Christian Church toward an actual Christian city, of a really evangelical land toward an evangelical world, as over against present convention and institutionalism! Ceasing all labial and perfunctory experimentation with Christ and broadly meeting the individual conditions of the starving hearts, all about, who say "no man careth for my soul," is the only way to certify Christ's concern for "the least of these," His brothers. His terrific satire upon those who were not weather-wise to discern the signs of the times bids all His alleged followers to read the social sky. It is practical

materialism and secularism, in the motives of those who have in custody " the key of knowledge," that breeds these among the masses. These are the revenges of neglected truth. Christ is either absolute or obsolete.

The crucified Mechanic does care for all who " labor and are heavy laden," and will compel the fraudulent, the extortionate, the sensual, the selfish not to interfere with His program. A poor man Himself, He stops His ears, when idle assumption, and fat luxury, and pride of purse, makes " Onward Christian Soldiers " but the ragtime song of a sham battle!

No, the " offense of the cross " is not ceased; but a genuine, and not an " as if " allegiance " under the law to Christ," the Lover of Men, would break down the icy walls of segregation, with its trivial strifes over shibboleths that both amuse and gratify the devil—would send the spooks of dilettante doubt and the specters of class hate (which hate I observe to be the property of no one class)—would send these to their " own place." What a fruitage were that!

Glory be to God, for all the faithful, the elect minority, who putting love into life, and right where they move, are struggling their best to capture and comfort fellow souls one by one. They are many, and angels attend them! The Lord knows them for His. They watch and pray for a different time; a hymn

of hope is in their hearts; they listen and long for any token of the great surprise. They respond to every knocking on the walls—the code of telepathy—"Is it He?" "Shall it be now?" These are the thousands that have not kissed Baal; these are the salt of the earth. They are sure that the King is true and will break through! They are the memorial of Christ, and witness the good confession:

> "With them numbered may we be
> Here and in eternity!"

And in the name of these, it is time to awake to the salvation of man which is nearer than when it was first believed—than when it first tore its furrows of light through the sodden Mediterranean world. Let thrones of iniquity fall that "frame mischief by statute!" Let the barren idolatries end. Let the foolish five rub their eyes!

> "Break, triumphant day!
> As it came in days of old, in the deepest hearts of men,
> When Thy martyrs died for Thee, let it come, O God, again."

And therefore we must rip ourselves free from what Isaac Taylor called "the indurating effect of words and the narcotic reaction of language," escape the parasites of frivolous lip-service, delicate will-worship, cushioned ease, escape the synagog of the lib-

ertines, and the gild of St. Jonah, and the covetousness which is idolatry. It is time for both emetic and tonic; time to vomit up ill-gotten gain; time for the changeless reproof that " no man can serve two masters "; time to expound the severity of James the Just, that " faith without works is dead in itself," to push the exactions of the gospel to the quick, to " mind true things by what their mockeries be," and " where the offense lies let the great ax fall!"

" Words " (wrote Thomas Hobbes) " are wise men's counters and the money of fools." The intrinsic is demanded. Nominalism and moderatism are the stumbling blocks of the world, and the prophet (like Amos, like Isaiah, like John) who is ever the voice of neglected practical righteousness, must share the reproach of Christ, and with a point-blank recall from " the treasures of Egypt " summon back to Christ those " hearers only " whom the world has so extensively subsidized!

We need the higher criticism upon ourselves whether we are canonical, or only apocryphal! The cleavage is obvious. Anything save genuine fidelity reduces the first chapter of Hebrews to a stagnant and evaporating tradition: " Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds! " The only exegesis is life, all else but sullies the page with its useless fingering. The document is adequate (yes, indispensable), to correct deteriorated practise,

the gloss of custom; but the text itself is corrupted unless its exactness is reproduced in fruits.

Could this brief Bible answer every possible mental question, still scholarship would not be religion, " pure and undefiled."

To keep the mainly prohibitive ten commandments (which for me at least, who am not yet even a good Jew, are ten indictments!) would still lack the " one thing " of that loyalty to Christ, without which, tho one observe the letter fairly well, he is " ashamed of the gospel." Self-denial is the good beginning but self-sacrifice (daily dying unto the Lord) is the aim and good end thereof.

It is this principle of mercy by which Christ purposes to rectify men and man, and from which you and I are such truants and traditors. Before it pride wags its head; but paradox of grace! it alone slays the enmity, and wipes away the tears it summons! This faith, once for all committed to us, as Christ's references, means, I am sure, such a transformation of all present ideas of veritable discipleship, such a " metamorphosing in the spirit of our minds " as first should make us whisper with blanched faces, and then should make our hearts burn with rapture! But " who may abide the day of His coming? "— the true " Parousia " of the Just One, who " is like a refiner's fire? "

How His reality measures what men call

personal success, and public prosperity! We all are sleep walkers and under the spell of those effects which we call "second causes." The present concentration of the laboratory upon those mere processes and media in which so much that calls itself "science" forgets both real cause, and the soul that knows, and that was made and meant to find itself in Him, and Him in this world, is reflected in our base neglect of Him who "is before all things and in whom all things hold together!"

But if we have not so learned Christ, then monastic absenteeism and secular travesty are alike rebuked, and we must not only carry His commands into affairs as their total test, but there hold and apply them like caustic. We cannot half praise and half deny. If Jesus Christ is not practicable, He is not credible. The status forces just that! If He is not primary, He is not even secondary! Pilate's "What shall I do with Him?" (do to Him, rather!) still offers either that He shall be re-crucified in the house of His friends, or the crowned Lord of the day and the deed! That "shall I—shall I" assent-dissent, which is the prime sneer of the bystander—Christ is moving to get it ended! It is either far too little, or far too much! Esthetic liturgy, sleek man-pleasing, all the hollow and frisky optimism of neglect, must presently change or get out of the King's way! Delilah shears those

who sleep on her lap, and they have Samson's end—destroying and destroyed! The Church, whose first apostles "shook all the mighty world," must turn back to the supernatural faith and its fidelities, or confess itself superfluous. Aching and desperate millions cry to it, "Awake, that we perish not," nay, cry past it to the Son of man as against both the Sadduceeism that "knows not the power of God," and the Pharisaism which sucks in its cheeks and rests in preemption, and privilege, and that selfishness of caste which is the practical antichrist. Luke writes that after our Lord's parable of the smart steward, those patronizing Pharisees who were "lovers of silver," "turned up their noses at Him." But still, and more than ever, superciliousness (however it may snort at it) must hear that the only available faith is so much as puts truth with troth, speaking with that accent of conviction which is only learned in concrete obedience. Such a faith "no longer lives unto self." Not merely as a condiment or a poultice it is like a grain of mustard seed. It is an idiom stript of decorative sentimentality, a vernacular version of action; the motive and energy of the Son of God!

The drama of the world moves faster. The hour calls for special men. The sap is rising. The tide is coming in. Somehow, somewhere, the great bell, that so long has only told off

the hours, is to "proclaim liberty" and "ring in the Christ that is to be." The world's Messiah does not tarry. The magnet sweeps its invisible strength through the whole miscellany—through all the fury and folly of the world. It is gathering to itself more than we guess. "We shall see greater things" in government, economics, society. The Healer of the nations calls loud to us to do the works that He did!—to receive and transmit His vital energy. Not by mortmain but by His present spirit, does He prepare His way. He whose beatitudes were His portrait, and whose life is the light of men, still walks the waves. He summons us to rise from all that has become so shabby and shop-worn, so musty and vacant, and again declares: "If ye abide in me, and my word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done!" Even Vergil said "A man can do anything that he believes he can."

Lord, help thou our shameless unbelief! Make us "worthy of our calling." Win now our hearts with the breath of God! Graft us anew into the very substance of Thy meaning and might! Help us to cast out devils in Thy name! Make us, tho so unworthy, Thy prophets and Thy ministers to a better time! Let Thy Father's house be no more a house of merchandise! Bread of life, make all things new! Brethren, "I am persuaded of you things that accompany salvation, tho I

thus speak." In the faith that maketh not ashamed, the faith in the human and world-wide Christ, the faith that rebukes Mammon and lays hold of the horns of the altar, I nail this thesis to the door!

SWETE

THE TEACHING OF JESUS ABOUT THE FATHER

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THE TEACHING OF JESUS ABOUT THE FATHER

PROF. H. B. SWETE, D.D.

"These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs. The hour cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but shall tell you plainly of the Father."—John 16 : 25.

IN what sense is it true that our Lord spoke to His disciples in proverbs? His teaching, as it is represented in the gospels, falls almost entirely under the two heads of discourse and parable, and neither of these answers to the usual conception of the proverb. But the proverb in its Biblical acceptation has a wider reference; it comprehends not merely the brief aphorisms and trite sayings current on the lips of man, but all sayings which contain more than they express; which, simple in form and phrase, are packed with thought that eludes the hearer because it lies beyond the range of his personal experience. Such sayings normally turn upon the analogy which exists between the outer form of things and the inner truth; they lead the mind on from what it knows or can imagine to that which lies as yet beyond its grasp. The parallelism may be locked up in a few pregnant words, or worked out at length. In

the latter case the proverb grows into the parable, the parable being merely an extended proverb, as the proverb is a contracted parable. Even the words are interchanged; the parable of the Good Shepherd is called by John παροιμία, while Luke gives the name of παραβολή to the proverb, "Physician, heal thyself." If we examine our Lord's Galilean teaching in the light of these facts, the truth of His saying in the text becomes apparent. Parables were the chief vehicle of instruction during the greater part of the ministry; "without a parable spake He not unto" the crowds that flocked to hear Him; "all things" were "done in parables," *i. e.*, the whole business of the ministry was transacted in this form.

But the parables, it may be urged, were not enigmatic; their purpose was to teach truth in the only shape in which a mixed multitude could receive it. This is widely different from our Lord's own account of them. The primary end of the parable, as He explained it, was not to assist the mental vision but to darken it: "that seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand." Doubtless the parable served to keep the word alive in men's hearts till the time came for growth, even as the seed preserves the germ which it conceals; but its immediate effect was not to reveal the truth but to hide it. How well it served this purpose

may be gathered from the fact that even the Twelve, to whom was given the mystery of the kingdom, were compelled to ask for an interpretation of the Parable of the Sower. It was our Lord's habit to explain to them in private the meaning of His public teaching; without this help even the inner circle of His disciples would have failed to understand it. The parable, notwithstanding its apparent simplicity, is of the nature of a veil; the obscurity which belongs to it is not accidental, but of its essence. Christ's design was to postpone full knowledge where definite teaching would be premature, and thereby to stimulate thought and provoke inquiry. As the son of Sirach says: "He that hath applied his soul . . . will seek out the hidden meaning of proverbs, and be conversant in the dark sayings of parables." Such inquirers there doubtless were among our Lord's hearers, men who had ears to hear and truly heard; but even in their case the proverb or parable was but preparatory to the fuller teaching which was to follow.

The Fourth Gospel creates at first a different impression of Christ's method. In the Johannine discourses He seems to drop parable and proverb, and to use a directness of teaching which is in strong contrast with His manner in the Synoptic Gospels. The difference is perhaps especially noticeable in the great discourse of the fourteenth and two fol-

lowing chapters. Here our Lord is represented as speaking only to the apostles, neither uninstructed peasants nor captious scribes being present; even Judas, it is expressly said, has left the upper room and gone out into the night. If ever there was an occasion upon which Jesus could pour out His mind freely, it was this. Yet it is of the discourse delivered at this gathering that He says, towards the end, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs." It seems, then, that while the literary form in which the Johannine sayings are cast differs widely from that to which we are accustomed in the Synoptists, they claim to possess a true affinity, an essential oneness with the curt sentences and enigmatic parables of the Galilean ministry. There is a note which is common to the Johannine and the Synoptic reports, a note which is deeper than manner or form and can be heard in all Christ's teaching down to the eve of the passion. Whether He instructed a crowd of fishermen, taxgatherers, traders, and peasants by the shore of the lake, or the chosen eleven in the sanctuary of the supper-chamber at Jerusalem, His method was substantially the same. From the day when He began to teach until the night before He suffered He followed a uniform plan. His plan was always to go beyond the immediate comprehension of His hearers—not indeed by the use of unintelligible words, for His

words are ever of the plainest—but by making simple words hold more than they seem to hold; by so speaking that, either in form or substance or in both, He spoke in proverbs which concealed more than they disclosed. No one who has occupied himself with the attempt to expound the gospels will fail to recognize the truth of this remark. The simplest of our Lord's sayings is found to be inexhaustible; when the student has done his best, he is constrained to leave it with the conviction that there are depths in it which he cannot fathom, and suggestions of half-revealed truths which for the present baffle inquiry.

It was, then, characteristic of our Lord to speak in proverbs; and the Christ of the Fourth Gospel does not differ herein materially from the Christ of the Synoptists. But when we have said this, we must be careful to add that the words hold true only of His teaching before the passion. Christ Himself has told us that His use of this method was only for a time; "the hour cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs." The great Master will not limit Himself to a single method; He will adapt Himself to circumstances. If He used proverbs and parables throughout His earthly ministry, even when speaking to the innermost circle of His disciples, this was because the time had not come for employing any other vehicle of teaching. But He distinctly foresees the arri-

val of the moment when proverbs may be flung to the winds, and He will be free to speak to these same apostles plainly and directly—*οὐκέτι ἐν παροιμίαις · · · ἀλλὰ παῤῥησίᾳ* [no longer in parables, but plainly]. The alliteration, which is repeated a few verses below, seems to show that the writer of the gospel wished forcibly to contrast the two methods. The proverb excludes plain speaking, and plain speaking, when it comes, will abandon the use of the proverb. In the future, Christ foretells, obscurity, whether of words or of thought, will give place to a luminous clearness, extending both to the form and the substance of the message. This is to be the main distinction between Christ's earlier teaching and His later, between the ministry which preceded the passion and that which will follow, between the teaching of Christ in the flesh and His teaching in the Spirit.

It follows that our Lord saw, beyond the rapidly approaching end of His earthly mission, the dawn of a fresh period of teaching under other conditions, and therefore after another method. His passion marked only the end of the first stage of His work as the Teacher of mankind. We call these chapters in John the "Last Discourse," but they are the last only of one series of the great Master's lessons. The days were past when excited crowds exclaimed, "What is this? a new teaching!" and hung upon His lips as if

afraid to lose a word; when hostile officials declared "Never man spake like this man," and could lay no hands upon Him, such was the fascination of His voice. The days were past when, alone with His disciples, He taught them, as they could bear it, the mystery of the kingdom of God. But all this has been but the prelude; the richest harmonies of Christ's teaching are yet to be heard. When? and how? He answers only, "The hour cometh," and the Church is left to interpret those words by the event. The phrase is one which occurs not seldom in the Gospel of John. "The hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice"; "the hour cometh that whosoever killeth you shall think that he offereth service to God"; "the hour cometh, yea is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own." It is clear from these examples that "the hour" which is intended may be remote or close at hand. Jesus does not say plainly which He means; He is still speaking in proverbs. But looking back at His words over the centuries we may venture to interpret them by the light of experience.

"The hour cometh when I shall tell you plainly of the Father." The words reveal both the subject and the manner of the Lord's future teaching. The subject will be the revelation of the Father; the manner, that of one who brings a clear and full report from first-

hand observation of the facts. In the earlier part of this discourse the Lord had announced that He was going to the Father, but would come again. He now adds that when He returns, He will bring back word of the Father.

To reveal the Father had been the purpose of His personal teaching from the first. Even in the days of His flesh He could tell men of that which He knew, and bear witness of that which He had seen in His preexistent life with God. He was Himself a living revelation of God; so that John, looking back from the end of the first century to the days of the Son of man, could say: "We beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten from a Father." When on the night before the passion Philip thoughtlessly exclaimed, "Lord, shew us the Father," the Lord with a touch of infinite sadness answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." All His teaching, all His life, had been directed to this one end, to show men the Father. Never before had man been taught so plainly the fatherhood of God. He had taught them to call daily upon "Our Father which is in Heaven," to look to the Father for daily bread, to imitate Him "as dear children," to prepare for their place in His presence. Yet this teaching, sufficient as it was to awaken a consciousness of the divine love and of human responsibility, left the mystery of

divine paternity unrevealed. In what sense God was the Father of Jesus Christ, in what sense He was the Father of Christ's disciples, were questions which still awaited an answer. There are those who bid us be content with the theology of the Sermon on the Mount. Christ Himself, be it said with reverence, was not content with it; He recognized that there was a plainer, fuller, more explicit report to be given when He returned from the Father, and to that future teaching He referred those who had heard all His earlier words.

Did our Lord then resume the office of Teacher after His return from the dead? Luke enables us to answer the question, as far as regards the immediate sequel to the passion. During the forty days that followed the resurrection, the Lord appeared from time to time and spoke to His apostles "the things concerning the kingdom of God." The old teaching began again; the subject was the same as before the passion. But was it handled in the same way? Only a few fragments of this post-resurrection teaching remain; but in them I think we can discern greater plainness of speech than in the sayings of the ministry. Take for example the words spoken on the first Easter night: "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. . . . Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye forgive they are forgiven." Or those spoken after the return to Galilee: "All authority hath

been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." This is assuredly plain speaking, and if there is nothing in either saying which is wholly new, the manner is new; it is παῤῥησία, not παροιμία any more. Indeed, the critics have so generally recognized the change of manner that in the second saying they have thought they discovered an idealized report, into which the next generation had infused its own beliefs and hopes. The hypothesis would have been unnecessary, if they had but remembered Christ's promise to convert proverb into plainness of speech, or if they had believed the words of the text to be truly Christ's.

But the forty days were only the beginning of the new order. The ascension which terminated the visible presence of Christ on earth, inaugurated His presence in the Spirit. The Bridegroom was taken away only to return at once in the power of the Holy Ghost. The "other Paraclete" who was promised was yet not another, for He was the very Spirit of the Son, of the Christ, of the sacred humanity of Jesus. When He spoke to the Church, He spoke not from Himself, but as the Vicar of Jesus Christ, teaching in Christ's stead, carrying on and completing Christ's ministry. Hence the Lord speaks of the

Spirit's teaching as His own. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now; howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all the truth . . . he shall take of mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine; therefore said I, that he taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you. . . . These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; the hour cometh when I shall tell you plainly of the Father."

The hour came, then, when the Spirit came; and the first results of the new παῤῥησία are to be seen in the teaching of the apostles, and especially in the epistles of Paul.

It is a fashion of our time to attach an excessive importance to the personality of Paul as a factor in the evolution of the Christian religion. Undoubtedly that personality is the most striking in the apostolic age—perhaps it may be added, in the whole history of the Church. Undoubtedly also, the teaching of Paul was colored by his mental habits, and these owed much to the influences of his Pharisaic upbringing. The relation of Paul to contemporary thought is a legitimate subject for inquiry, and we have recently been reminded how much may be gleaned by a diligent worker in this field.* But it is impossi-

* See H. St. J. Thackeray, "The Relation of St. Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought," Macmillan, 1900.

ble to ascribe Paul's presentation of Christianity as a whole to any such source; the only question that can arise with regard to it, is whether we are to consider it as a product of the apostle's own mind, or as due, in the last analysis, to the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The former of these alternatives is often taken for granted; men speak of the gospel which Paul preached as "Paulinism," as if it were a type of Christianity which owes more to Paul than to Christ; and of Paul himself as a second founder of the Christian faith. But to speak thus is to claim that our own age understands Paul better than he understood himself. In all his epistles he styles himself "the servant," nay "the bond-slave," of Jesus Christ; he assures us that the gospel which he preached was "not after man," but had come to him "through revelation of Jesus Christ"; that Christ lived in him, worked in him, spoke in him, through the Spirit. On this point I gladly quote the judgment of Professor Harnack:

> "Paul understood the Master, and continued His work. . . . Those who blame him for corrupting the Christian religion have never felt a breath of his spirit . . . those who extol or criticize him as the founder of a religion are forced to make him bear witness against himself on the main point."

I would add to this that those who thus misjudge Paul's position, either forget or ignore the Lord's promise that His Spirit should

guide His Church into all the truth, telling her plainly of the Father. In the light of that magnificent promise Paulinism is seen to be, in its essence, nothing else than a continuation of the teaching of Christ. It is the voice of Christ, speaking at length παῤῥησίᾳ, with a new directness and comprehensiveness. If utterance was given to Paul to make known the mystery of the gospel more fully than it was taught by the other apostles, more plainly than it had been taught by the Master Himself, he was in this simply a witness of things wherein Christ revealed Himself to him through the Spirit. Thus, when Paul proclaims his great doctrine of justification by faith, while the arguments by which he defends it rest here and there on methods which belong to his age and mental training, we are assured that the doctrine itself, in its inner verity, is but the teaching of Christ brought out into the clearer light of the Spirit. Or again, when he unfolds his doctrine of the person of Christ, and teaches the divine preexistence of the Son and the meaning of the incarnation, we know ourselves to be listening to the very Spirit of Christ, who through the apostle's words is glorifying Christ as Christ foretold. The same is true of the other great apostolic teachers. We hear the voice of the Spirit of Jesus Christ in John's doctrine of the Word made flesh, and not less clearly in the doctrine of the Lord's high-priestly office

as it is set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The apostolic letters speak plainly where Christ spoke in proverbs; but the Teacher is the same, tho the method is changed.

A Paul or a John comes but once in the life of the Church. But it is a shallow unbelief which would limit the teaching of the Spirit of Christ to the first century; and such unbelief is refuted, if refutation be necessary, by the promises "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"; "the Father . . . shall give you another Comforter that he may be with you forever." The Spirit was not granted only to the first generation. Nor was He granted only to the ante-Nicene Church, or to the age of the great councils, or to the medieval saints, or to the reformers. The grant is for all time. Christ teaches His Church to-day as truly as He taught the apostles and the fathers and the schoolmen and the reformers; the Spirit speaks now as certainly as He spoke in the days when dogma was being made in the yet undivided Church. His instruments, His manner of teaching, vary from age to age. To-day, He does not teach, as some hold, by creating fresh articles of faith; still less by proclaiming new gospels, messages of peace and healing for the world which were unknown to the ancient Church. The Spirit of Christ will never proclaim any other gospel than that which Christ proclaimed on the first day of His preaching in

Galilee; will never teach any other faith than that which was once for all delivered to the saints. But as the world grows older, the Spirit of Christ may be expected to tell men more and more plainly of the Father. There have been and there will be fresh interpretations of the original message, new lights thrown on the teaching of Scripture and on the doctrine of the Church. The Light of the world is ever bringing on the dawn of the perfect day; the unchangeable truth grows clearer in the growing light of knowledge and experience.

There has been in the best theological teaching of the last fifty years, within our memory, a marvelous extension of Christian thought, an opening up of new or forgotten avenues of truth, a lifting of clouds which had long obscured the field of vision, a casting away of unsound opinions and mere presuppositions, which marks a real advance in spiritual knowledge. We have had our prophets, even if we have not ventured, while they were with us, to call them by that name; we have had teachers to whom it has been given to look into the mysteries of life and of grace with an insight not wholly due to strength of intellect or length of experience. If for the moment they have been taken from us, and we seem to-day to have no prophet amongst us any more, they have at least taught us that the Spirit of Christ in His illuminating power

has not been withdrawn from the modern Church.

Nor is it only in the province of theology that our Lord's great promise is fulfilling itself to our own age. Indeed it is perhaps chiefly by the discoveries of physical science that He is to-day telling us plainly of the Father. It is true, alas! that to many of the discoverers themselves these new marvels bring as yet no message from the Father of their spirits, or seem rather to exclude the possibility of His personal existence. They cannot see the sun for the glory of the light; their vision is darkened by the brightness of this new revelation of God. But we have reason to hope that this first effect of physical research will pass with fuller knowledge and reflection. Meanwhile it is for the Church to welcome these great accessions to knowledge as a true fulfilment of the Lord's word. To us at least He is speaking in them more plainly than before, telling us of the Father in His relation to the visible world. We know and believe that it is the Only Begotten who declares the Father, whatever the revelation may be, through whatever channel it may come.

It is impossible to foresee the surprises which even the near future may have in store for not a few of us. Within the lifetime of the younger men new lights may break upon the Church, bringing new fulfilments of

Christ's words. Such a hope may well inspire life with a buoyancy which will stimulate the next generation to new endeavors. In view of the promise of progressive teaching which the Church has received from Christ, no problem need be abandoned as hopeless, and all lines of legitimate study may be pursued with confidence. "I will tell you plainly," is a word which will fulfil itself ever more and more to those who are patient workers in every part of the great field of knowledge.

Yet its complete fulfilment must lie beyond the present order. Come what may, there are limits imposed by human infirmity which cannot be removed in the present life; limits partly of the spirit, partly of the intellect, partly due to the inability of human words to express the highest truths. No one has recognized this more clearly than Paul, notwithstanding the abundance of the revelations vouchsafed to him. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I felt as a child, I thought as a child . . . now we see in a mirror darkly . . . now I know in part." The proverb, the enigma, must enter largely even into the teaching of the Spirit, so long as we are here. The plainest words that can be used to express our faith are not free from obscurity; the most carefully balanced statements of Christian doctrine are, in the last analysis, found to be in some respects confessions of our ignorance. There is in every great article

of our faith an ultimate enigma which baffles our efforts to construct a perfect theory. Sometimes we seem to be on the verge of a solution, but further reflection throws us back; the mystery eludes us still. It has been so in every age of the Church; it will be so, we may be very sure, to the end. The "proverb" is with us still, notwithstanding Christ's greater and growing "plainness of speech."

But the fact is suggestive of hope and not of despair. There must be a more magnificent fulfilment of Christ's promise reserved for the future state. There must be a teaching in store for us which will exceed our present knowledge, as the teaching of the Spirit exceeded the parables of our Lord's ministry.

How our Lord will teach His Church in the great future is altogether beyond present comprehension. The apocalyptic imagery of the New Testament, largely based on Old Testament conceptions of the world to come, speaks of Him as coming in the clouds of heaven with the glory of God; of a throne set and books opened; of a new Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven; of God tabernacling with men, and men seeing God day and night in His temple, or made pillars therein, and bearing upon them an inscription which reveals the name of God and His Christ; of a Shepherd who is Himself a Lamb, leading His flock to fountains of waters of life, and of God wiping away every tear from their eyes. We rec-

ognize at once the symbolical character of these descriptions. But what are the facts which lie behind the symbolism? One thing can be clearly made out. The future holds for us a presence of Christ not altogether such as we now have through the indwelling of His Spirit, but such as will be a new manifestation of the risen Christ to the risen Church. It is not another coming of the Spirit which is the hope of the future, but another coming of the Christ in person; not a *vicaria vis Spiritus sancti,* but the very power of the incarnate Lord revealing in Himself the fulness of the divine glory. How this can be we can no more understand than the apostles could understand the coming of the other Paraclete before He actually came. Nor again can we see the relation which the second coming of the Son will bear to the mission of the Spirit. Will the teaching of the Spirit be merged in the personal teaching of the Lord, visibly present with His Church? We know not. But we are sure that in the perfect life Christ will at length tell us plainly of the Father. The last riddle will be solved, the full measure of the divine παῤῥησία attained. If I may venture to carry John's alliteration one step further, the παῤῥησία of the Spirit which succeeded to the παροιμία of the ministry, will culminate in the παρουσία. The silence of God will be broken at last; the final mystery will become, as Ignatius has it, a μυστήριον

κρανγῆς, a truth proclaimed aloud that all may hear.

Yet it is not to be thought that all truth will be flashed in a moment upon the soul that has reached the presence of Christ. The analogies of God's dealings with mankind in the past point to a progressive illumination in the world to come. Teaching will not cease because mystery has vanished away. "The Lamb shall guide them." The metaphor speaks of an endless advance in the knowledge of the Infinite.

The prospect is one which ought to appeal with especial force to us whose daily life here is spent in the endeavor to learn and read the lower lessons of truth. All truth is one, and every truth is in its measure a revelation of God. Thus we may, if we will, connect our pursuit of exact knowledge in letters or history or philosophy or physics with our eternal work of learning to know God in Christ. Habits of mind, of character, of life, can be formed here which we may carry with us into the eternal order. With such an end in view, nothing is trivial, nothing is to be despised. "He that is faithful in a very little"—how little it is that we can learn or teach here!—"is faithful also in much."

One thing is needful in order that our studies may be linked on to the eternal. The conscience must be kept bright and clear; the ear of the soul must lie open to the voice of

Christ. His plainest words fall like muffled sounds on hearts that are preoccupied by sin or self. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"; they shall hear all that the divine Word will tell them of the Father.

TERRY

THE APOSTOLIC INTERPRETATION OF CHRIST

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THE APOSTOLIC INTERPRETATION OF CHRIST

PROF. MILTON S. TERRY, D.D., LL.D.

"I am the light of the world."—John 9 : 5.
"Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5 : 14.
"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fully established among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in orderly sequence, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed."—Luke 1 : 1-4.
"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by distributions of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will."
—Hebrews 2 : 3, 4. [Private translation.]

THESE various scriptures of the New Testament have obvious bearing on the question which I propose to discuss, namely: How far the apostolic interpretation of Christ is trustworthy and authoritative? It is conceded at the start that whatever Christ Himself clearly taught is authoritative. He is the light of the world. He is the great divine Teacher; the supreme Personality

among the many master minds that have spoken with authority. But He lived and taught well nigh two thousand years ago. What do we certainly know now of the words, the exact teachings of Jesus Christ? It is reported that he once wrote with His finger on the ground, but what He wrote is unknown, and even the passage which records the story is set aside by the majority of recent critics as no part of the Fourth Gospel. Aside from the statements of that disputed and rejected text, there is no evidence that Jesus ever wrote a word.

But it is commonly supposed that the four gospels, aside from all disputed texts, contain to a great extent the very words of Jesus. There are the Sermon on the Mount, the parables, the long discourses recorded in Matthew and John, and numerous other teachings which are reported as having been spoken by the Lord. But these reported words of Jesus are so conspicuously at variance in the different gospels that the most devout reader may often search in vain to find the exact language of the great Teacher. Even the title put upon the cross, and the words of Jesus at the last supper, are reported differently by each of the evangelists. The whole cast of thought, tone and style of the Fourth Gospel are so notably different from the Synoptic gospels that numerous writers of the present time do not hesitate to say that it is a product of

Alexandrian thought rather than a trustworthy record of the sayings of Jesus.

Paul's writings, moreover, possess a marked originality in their presentation of the doctrines of grace, human depravity, justification by faith, atonement in Christ, and the eternal purposes of God, so that some modern teachers do not hesitate to say that the bulk of systematic theology, as enunciated in the later creeds of Christendom, is Paulinism rather than the doctrine of Christ. It is maintained that the Epistle of James teaches a doctrine of justification by works, directly opposite to Paul's doctrine of faith, and that the Epistle to the Hebrews defines faith as the substance of things hoped for, in a manner differing from both James and Paul. To all this add the statement of the ancient church-historian Eusebius that some in his day doubted the apostolic origin and authority of the epistles of James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and the book of Revelation.

I think this is a fair, and for our present purpose a sufficient, statement of the difficulties which are supposed to detract from the value and authority of the apostolic writings. Unquestionably these statements, maintained as positive propositions by not a few influential writers of the present time, have disturbed the faith of many. The devout Christian, upon hearing such apparent disparagement of books which he has ever regarded as sacred,

and has been accustomed to call the word of God, is apt to feel that the foundations of his faith have been assailed, and that if such statements can be shown to be true, we can no longer appeal to evangelists and apostles as final authority.

How, now, shall we meet the difficulties of this problem, and what measure of authority are we to recognize in the apostolic interpretation of Christ? There are several methods of dealing with a question of this kind. One is to make uncompromising war upon the methods and results of scientific criticism. Another is to ignore the points at issue, and as far as possible withhold from the common people all knowledge of critical controversy. There are a few who appear to view the battle afar off, and if they find occasion to say anything, act the part of artful fencers by a dodging of real issues, avoiding the thrusts of the adversary, and "playing fast and loose." The only true method is that which proceeds on the principle of "proving all things, and holding fast that which is good." We must first of all insist upon a clear statement of the points at issue, and a clear definition of the terms we employ in argument. Half of our difficulties may arise from a misunderstanding of the real nature of the question before us, and a failure to define the terms we use.

Our first care in the discussion of the subject before us is to repudiate certain extrava-

gant and untenable claims touching the nature of the writings of the apostles. What do we mean by authoritative apostolic interpretation of Jesus Christ? We certainly ought not to claim for the New Testament writers an authority or an infallibility which they do not claim for themselves. Are there not many pious people who treat the entire Bible as if it were God Himself? They have somehow acquired the notion that every line and word of it is the direct gift of the almighty Father. Nor is this notion confined to the ignorant and credulous alone. It has grown out of a sort of *a priori* reasoning about the Scriptures: "These holy oracles are a gift of God; therefore they must needs be perfect." In the seventeenth century the absolute perfection of the Bible in all its parts was insisted on as an article of the true faith, and it is affirmed in one of the Swiss confessions that the inspiration of the Hebrew Scriptures extends to "the consonants, the vowels and the vowel points." The purists of that period and as late as the eighteenth century insisted that the Greek of the New Testament was deficient in no element of perfection as compared with the classical Greek. All these extravagant claims for the literal perfection and infallibility of the Bible sprang from *a priori* assumptions of what those theologians imagined the written word of God ought to be.

Those controversies are obsolete and half

forgotten now. But other issues of a similar character are kept alive by reason of similar assumptions as to the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures. Other current ideas of a traditional character have so far possessed men's minds that when one affirms that the Psalms are not all from David, nor the book of Proverbs by Solomon; that Ecclesiastes is a pseudograph written in the name of Solomon long after the Babylonian exile, and the Pentateuch is not the composition of Moses—many hold up their hands in holy horror, and seem to think that such opinions are essentially at war with the teachings and the religion of Jesus Christ.

Would it not be better to inquire, What are the facts upon which these assertions are based? Some of them are so positive and simple that one marvels how sundry current notions about the authorship of the Psalms and Proverbs ever became so general. The Psalter contains psalms ascribed to Asaph, and Heman, and Solomon, and Moses; and the book of Proverbs contains at least seven different collections, one of which consists of "the words of Agur," and another of "the words of Lemuel, which his mother taught him." As for the authorship of the Pentateuch, one may naturally hesitate to affirm that Moses wrote the account of his own death and burial, or to believe that a meek and modest man would write what we read in Numbers 12:3:

"Now the man Moses was very meek above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." So extravagant are the notions of some people about the perfection of the Biblical writers that it is affirmed that Solomon knew all about the modern telephone, Daniel was acquainted with the rise and power of the American republic, and Paul was fully aware, when he wrote his epistles, that they were destined to become a part of the Bible, and a divine authority for the world. An earnest Christian and well-educated man assured me that his faith in God and the Bible was disturbed by the statement of a Biblical scholar in whom he had had much confidence that the Epistle to the Hebrews was not the work of Paul the apostle. Others are perplexed and confounded on being told that the doxology of the Lord's prayer, and the story of the angel that troubled the waters of Bethesda are rejected by the latest criticism, and are even omitted from the Revised Version of our English Bible. "I do not see," said a venerable man to me some time ago, "but that this modern criticism is going on to wipe out the old Bible altogether."

Is it not evident, in view of these things, that our first duty in attempting to show the nature of apostolic authority is to disabuse the popular mind of sundry current vague and erroneous notions of what the Bible is? How can we faithfully and securely build

the people up in the true knowledge of the Scriptures without laying again the foundation of elementary facts and principles?

We inquire in the second place what the New Testament writers claim for themselves as interpreters of Christ. What have the written gospels and the apostolic epistles to say or imply as to their nature and authority? Are the letters of James and John and Peter and Paul natural or supernatural, human or superhuman? If they embody a divine or supernatural element, wherein is that element to be discerned?

Let us begin with a brief study of the preface to the Gospel of Luke. "It seemed good to me," he writes Theophilus, "having traced the course of all things from the first, to write unto thee in orderly sequence." Here we find no claim of supernatural assistance. Like any other historian who aims to put on record a trustworthy narrative of facts, he also made diligent search to obtain the best accredited testimony of eyewitnesses. Why should we or any one make a claim of infallibility or of supernatural help for a writer who seems not only to make no pretension to such assistance, but rather implies that he has prepared his narrative in an ordinary human way?

If now we turn to Matthew and Mark, we find much of the same matter as that recorded by Luke, but no assertion whatever of careful

inquiry after the certainty of the matters recorded, or of divine assistance in the work. John's Gospel, however, differs notably from the other three, and has produced the conviction that its language and style are those of its author rather than of Jesus, so that when it makes record of the sayings of our Lord, those sayings are not the very words of Christ, but His teachings as apprehended and translated by the evangelist. He claims to have written these things "that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name." In another place he says, "He that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe" (19 : 35). At the close of the gospel we find a postscript which seems to have been appended by the first readers of the gospel rather than the author himself: "This is the disciple who bears witness of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his witness is true." But whether these words were written by the apostle John himself or some other hand, their utmost claim is that the record is altogether true and trustworthy.

The First Epistle of John begins with a statement so important and impressive that I quote it in full: "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which

we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the word of life (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you the life, the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: and these things we write, that our joy may be fulfilled." This passage is the most positive kind of testimony of personal contact with Jesus Christ. The writer testifies that he has seen and heard and touched and carefully examined the one adorable Personage in whom the word of life was incarnate. The entire epistle is in keeping with this lofty claim, but at the same time the author admonishes his readers " not to believe every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." We must accordingly in every case, reserve the right of conscientious judgment, and determine on rational grounds what is true and what is false.

The epistles of James and Peter make no claim of other or greater authority than that of " servants and apostles of Jesus Christ." They are of the nature of pastoral letters addrest to communities of Christians, and filled with godly counsel and instruction.

Turning now to the epistles of Paul, we

find him everywhere confessing himself an apostle and bond-servant of Jesus Christ. He has no message but that which he claims to have received by divine revelation, and he speaks and writes as one who is gifted with a notable measure of divine authority. Hear him as he writes to the Galatians: "Tho we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but through revelation of Jesus Christ. For I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it. But when it was the good pleasure of God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them who were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to become personally acquainted with Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now touching the things I write you, behold, before God, I do not lie." Here is a profession of divine illumination and authority which is too explicit to be misunderstood. His fifteen days of personal interview with

Peter afforded a great opportunity to verify and supplement the current tradition of Jesus Christ, but he insists that his divine call and apostleship were not dependent upon any mortal man. And this fact is not to be set aside or weakened by his saying elsewhere that he was least of all the apostles, and unfit to be called an apostle, because of his persecuting the Church of God (1 Cor. 15 :9), and that Christ appeared unto him last of all as to the child untimely born. In the matter of illumination and teaching, his claim was to be "not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." This positive claim of revelation and authority directly from God is, therefore, a conspicuous feature in the writings of Paul.

It has been repeatedly asserted in modern times that the theology of Paul has been a controlling element in Christian thought, and so far dominated the life and teaching of the churches that the real doctrines of Jesus have been overshadowed. The saying of the famous Frenchman has been repeated many times, and with apparent approval, that when Phebe the deaconess carried Paul's Epistle to the Romans from Cenchrea to Rome, she held, wrapt in the folds of her mantle, the theology of nineteen centuries. Well, it need not be disputed that the apostle of the Gentiles, as he himself affirms in that great epistle (11 : 13), "magnified his office." He glorified his ministry by an unquenchable zeal to

preach the gospel of which he was not ashamed. But so far from misrepresenting or changing the gospel of the Lord, he determined to know nothing among the people he instructed save Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Cor. 2 : 2). He is no independent and superior dogmatist, but the bond-slave of Jesus, and he utters his anathema against any and all who preach another gospel.

But while we thus make due note of the apostle's claims of divine authority, we ought also to observe that the larger portions of Paul's epistles are not of a doctrinal character. In fact he always writes more as a pastor than a theologian. His letters abound in personal greetings, in statements of personal experience, in words of rebuke and admonition. He speaks of baptizing several persons in Corinth, but he is uncertain whether he baptized any others than those named. He requests Timothy to bring him the cloak which he left at Troas, and also the books and parchments. He writes to Philemon in most affecting tenderness about his son Onesimus, whom he had begotten in his bonds. He tells the saints at Rome how often he had purposed coming unto them, and how much he longed to see them. On certain questions of Christian expediency he frankly said that he had no commandment of the Lord to offer, but he gave his judgment as one who had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. In short,

he is a man among men. The human element in his writings, as in his person and nature, is as conspicuous as we have seen it in the other apostles. He is a man compassed with infirmities, asking the churches to pray for him. He subjects his body to painful discipline, lest by any means, after having been a herald to others, he himself should be rejected.

Paul the apostle, therefore, like all the other apostles, was a man called and anointed of God for a most important ministry. He did not contravene, nor misinterpret and pervert the doctrines of his Lord. He accepted as certain all the great facts and truths which came as a blesséd inheritance to the churches from those " who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word." He had received his own special revelations from Jesus Christ, but in common with all the apostles he declared, " We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. Seeing it is God who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ " (2 Cor. 4 : 5, 6).

We are now prepared to deal directly with our main question: How far the apostolic interpretation of Christ is authoritative? And our answer is, in a word, just so far as it goes. That is, just so far as apostolic tradition and

teaching, fairly interpreted, assume to be a faithful setting forth of the person, character, sayings and revelations of Jesus, they are to be accepted as altogether true and trustworthy. None of the apostles give us reason to believe that they followed cunningly devised fables, or had the slightest desire to misrepresent that which they declare to be the doctrine of their Lord. There is now no higher external authority to which we can appeal. If any one say, "Away from the apostles and back to Jesus," he has still to face the fact that we are dependent on the apostolic tradition for all we know of Jesus' words and works. The four gospels and the apostolic writings are so many reports, traditions and interpretations of Jesus Christ, and they are authoritative so far as they convey convictions of truth to our conscience and our heart.

The authority and value of the apostolic testimony may be seen in the light of the three following propositions: (1) The apostles of Jesus were evidently captivated and carried along in their work by the supreme conviction that their Lord was the true Messiah, the very Christ of God and the Savior of the world. (2) The Christ they preached is a character so perfect that it is impossible for us to believe that their interpretation of Him is a product of their own imagination or invention. (3) The variety in types of

doctrine among the New Testament writers, so far from presenting incongruities and contradictions, discloses rather the manifold fulness and riches of the gospel of Jesus.

One of the most impressive facts in the apostolic writings is the supreme devotion to Christ which His first heralds everywhere evince. The love of Christ has over them an all-constraining power. They are ready to go to prison or to death for the sake of His name. He is the source of their authority; He is their wisdom, their strength, their hope, their joy. James calls himself "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," and counts it all joy to fall into divers tests and proofs of faith that lead to the divine approval and the crown of life. Peter declares it blesséd to be reproached for the name of Christ, and so to be partakers of Christ's sufferings. John glories in the loving witness that "God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath the life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." Paul cries in an exultant tone, "I have been crucified with Christ: yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." The Acts of the Apostles records that "with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,

and great grace was upon them all." One obvious purpose of the Gospel of Matthew is to show that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiantic king, the son of David and son of Abraham, the hope of Israel and of the world. And apostolic heralds of this Son of God and Son of man went everywhere preaching the word. and turning the world upside down. Stephen was stoned to death; James the brother of John was killed with the sword; others were imprisoned and threatened. But they counted not their lives dear unto themselves, but took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and were ready to undergo any sacrifice and peril for the name of Christ. Now I deem it important, first of all to emphasize these facts. For while it is very possible for religious enthusiasts to become fanatical, and even to go bravely to a martyr's death for a delusion which they believe to be the truth of God, the testimony and doctrine and work of the apostles are without a real parallel in history. The fall of Judaism and the beginning of the going forth of the gospel of Christ form a most conspicuous turning-point in the ages. That was the opening of a new era in the history and civilization of mankind. We insist that the first apostles, even if they were enthusiasts, were the most sane of men, the most removed from anything like fanatical delusion, and the most deliberate, rational and intelligent interpreters of God in history, that

can be found in the religious annals of the world.

In the next place we aver that the Christ of the apostles is a character so perfect that it is impossible to believe their interpretation of Him is a product of their own imagination. The various theories which have been devised in modern times to explain away the miraculous element in the gospel narratives have not succeeded in satisfying the common sense of Christendom. I venture to say that the ingenious naturalistic explanations of Jesus' miracles by Paulus, the mythical hypothesis of Strauss, and the several modifications of these theories by other writers have never really satisfied the honest critical judgment of any large number of thoughtful minds. Whatever theory of the miracles one may adopt, there stands the peerless Christ of the apostles forever greater than His miracles. His commanding personality, as mirrored in the gospels, is inexplicable on any naturalistic principles. Let us look a moment at a few of the most striking facts which the apostles affirm of Jesus Christ:

(1) The authority of His teaching. He boldly assumed to supplement and even to set aside that which was said by them of old time. He made himself greater than Abraham, Moses, Solomon and the prophets. The officers of the chief priests and Pharisees testified that man never spoke like this man. He

scandalized the Jewish teachers of His time by His authoritative attitude towards the national institutions and customs. He spoke in parables which remain to this day jewels in the literature of the world. Surely no rabbi, sage, lawgiver or philosopher ever taught with such commanding authority as Jesus.

(2) His marvelous self-assumption and self-expression. He assumed power on earth to forgive sins, and declared that the Father had committed all judgment into His hands. What other teacher or prophet ever presumed to say, "I am the light of the world." "I am the bread of life." "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me." "I am the resurrection and the life, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"? Such assumptions as these sayings involve would be treated as the extravagance of insanity in any other person, but they seem perfectly natural in Jesus.

(3) His sinlessness. One of His most memorable sayings is: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" The uniform apostolic testimony is that He was holy, harmless, undefiled, tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. He is called the righteous and holy one, a lamb without blemish and without spot. The entire portraiture of His spotless character as presented in the four gospels accords

with these ideals. Although He assumed the power to forgive the sins of others, He nowhere acknowledges any need of repentance on His own part. He is the one unchallengeable sinless man of history.

(4) These facts become the more impressive and wonderful in view of the conditions of His obscure birth, His short period of public life, and His shameful crucifixion. A great genius may, indeed, rise to notoriety and honor in spite of poverty and reproach. He may triumph over strong and malicious opposition. But we have looked in vain for the record of another man, who, with all these conditions against him, in a career of three years, cut off by ignominious crucifixion, has commanded the thousandth part of the power which the name of Jesus holds in the world to-day. The late Philip Schaff is credited with the following words: "Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander, Cæsar, Mohammed and Napoleon; without science and learning, He shed more light on things human and divine than all the philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of schools, he spoke words of life such as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, he has set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discus-

sions, learned volumes, works of art and sweet songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times. Born in a manger, and crucified as a malefactor, He now controls the destines of the civilized world, and rules a spiritual empire which embraces one third of the inhabitants of the globe."

Our third proposition is that the apostolic interpretation of Christ, so far from being disparaged or weakened in authority by reason of variety of types of doctrine found in the New Testament, is rather by that very fact exhibited in greater fulness and beauty than if it had come down to us in a stereotyped uniformity of statement.

I think our older theologians too generally failed to make the important distinction between unity of doctrine and uniformity of doctrine. They of course observed the varieties of thought and expression among the different Biblical writers, but their ideas of inspiration were generally so mechanical and unbending that any real progress of doctrine in the New Testament was rarely supposed to be possible. The human element in Scripture, with its conflicting tendencies, its various points of view and methods of statement, was often quite ignored. Luther's hasty rejection of the Epistle of James is a striking illustration of the assumption that uniformity of doctrine must needs be found in all authorita-

tive Scripture. Many of the attempts to harmonize all the statements of the four gospels have proceeded on the supposition that real discrepancies in matters of detail would seriously weaken the authority and credibility of the evangelists. But the fact is that there is a remarkable lack of uniformity in the four gospels in their representation of the Christ. Take for example their several reports of our Lord's temptation. John makes no mention of it. Mark says that after the baptism "straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him." Matthew adds to this simple record a kind of dramatic picture of three distinct temptations, and writes down particular conversations between Jesus and the devil. Luke repeats the story of the three temptations, but records them in a different order, and with noticeable verbal variations. For another example, take Matthew's report of the parable of the talents and Luke's report of the parable of the ten pounds. These parables obviously inculcate the same great lesson, but differ in the occasion of their utterance, and in their language and imagery. They may be regarded as varying reports of one and the same parable of Jesus, or as two independent parables uttered on different occasions. Add to these examples all we have

previously referred to, as the remarkable diversities of statement and teaching among the evangelists and apostles, and we are compelled to acknowledge that there is a striking lack of uniformity in the apostolic interpretation of Christ.

But while we are careful to note the variety of types of teaching in the New Testament, we maintain that they nowhere involve essential contradictions, or misinterpret the real teaching of Christ. A fundamental unity of doctrine is apparent back of all this variety of types. We have not only gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but a Gospel according to Peter, and a Gospel according to James, and another according to the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. These are not opposing and irreconcilable gospels. Their differences are but the natural and normal idiosyncrasies of so many individuals, each captivated and controlled by the spirit of their one common Lord. Paul and Barnabas differed in judgment and separated from each other in their missionary work; Paul also resisted Peter to his face at Antioch, charged him with dissimulation and inconsistency so that he stood condemned. The Second Epistle of Peter declares that Paul's epistles contain some things hard to be understood. All the apostles were men of like passions with us, and incidental confusion of thought and errors may be found in their

writings. But on all the great matters of fact and doctrine they are at one. There is substantial unity in their concept of Christ, but notable variety in the manner in which they preach the one living gospel of the common salvation. We should expect the same differences in result if Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson and Browning had written on one great theme.

We shall obtain the true idea of this variety of interpretation when we come to look upon it as God's own method of revealing His eternal truth. Not rigid uniformity, but conspicuous variety of method is a leading feature of the entire Biblical revelation. God spoke in old time to the fathers in the prophets "by divers portions and in divers manners." And when in the fulness of time He spoke in His Son, He caused that the new word of life should go forth into all the world in just such variety of thought and form as appear in the word of the ancient prophets. The gospel of Peter is not the gospel of John, nor that of Paul. But these apostles all present the gospel of Christ as truly as Amos, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah spoke the word of God. Their differences of conception and expression show that the human is to be recognized in their writings as well as the divine. We possess the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels, and the treasure is none the less heavenly because it is thus enshrined. It is, I think, a mis-

chievous error, and can only lead to trouble and confusion in the Church of Christ, for over-zealous defenders of the faith to go about declaring that the vessel is not earthen. It will not add one whit to the honor and value of the vessel to insist on its being something which it is not. We possess the heavenly illumination, so to speak, in a great variety of human forms. Peter had his natural limitations, and his more exclusive ministry to the circumcision imposed a corresponding limitation upon his interpretation of the gospel of Jesus. Paul's wider mission to the Gentiles enlarged his range of vision. John's esoteric mode of thought, intensified by long contact with Alexandrian theosophy, produced the most profound and spiritual version of the teaching of Jesus. But old-fashioned James, "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ," keeps well within his Jewish environment, and insists that "the twelve tribes which are of the Dispersion" exhibit the practical godliness of visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and fulfilling the royal law of love to one's neighbor. We gain nothing for the gospel of Christ by ignoring the human limitations of all these blessed apostles. Even Paul, generally supposed to be the most catholic of them all, betrays in his epistles at times a measure of unconscious bondage to his Pharisaic training and to rabbinical habits of thought. Our con-

tention is that the gospel of Jesus is none the less authoritative, but vastly the fuller and richer by reason of its transmission through many apostles and ministers of God.

We shall perhaps obtain our best ideal of apostolic authority from the words which Jesus Himself addrest to Simon Peter: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." I understand that what is here directly addrest to Peter because of his representative leadership among the twelve and the significance of his name (which is by interpretation a stone), is also by implication true of the other apostles. The same thing in substance was said to them on other occasions (see Matt. 18:18; 19:28; John 20:23). They were the anointed leaders, chosen by the Lord to lay the foundations of Christianity. Whatsoever they did in fulfilment of this holy office and ministry was ratified in heaven. And Peter, afterward writing to the Christians scattered abroad in Asia Minor, tells them that, coming unto Christ as to a living stone, they also as living stones are built up a spiritual house. Paul also teaches that the Christian Church is the "household of God, being built upon the

foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the chief corner-stone." In beautiful harmony with this imagery we have the vision of the city of God, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven and made ready as a bride adorned for her husband, " and the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." The visional symbolism is enhanced by the further statement that these foundations were adorned with all manner of precious stones, like the jasper, the sapphire and the amethyst. For the apostles of our Lord were privileged above all other men to look with unveiled face upon the Christ Himself. It was their unspeakable glory to have seen and heard and handled the very word of life as manifested in the personality of Jesus. They became transfigured by His adorable presence, and exalted by the power of His Spirit. Their personal contact with the Son of God, and their special commission from Him place them apart from and above all other men as interpreters of the Christ. And we thank God to-day that there were twelve apostles of Christ rather than one or two. They are like a crown of twelve stars upon the head of the Church during all her period of travail and persecution. They are the light of the world, for tho their luster is but a reflection of that greater light which lighteth every man

coming into the world, it is a true and reliable reflection.

Years ago I made a journey to the capital of Denmark mainly for the purpose of looking on Thorwaldsen's great masterpiece of sculpture—the Christ and His apostles. There they stand, in "the Church of our Lady," wonderful in their impressive silence. The figure of Christ is placed under a massive canopy back of the high altar, and the apostles, in two rows, stand facing each other down the long nave of the church. Each apostle bears some distinctive symbol. There is Peter with the keys, and John with book and pen in hand and an eagle at his feet. James holds a staff, and Andrew a cross and a roll. Judas Iscariot is not represented, but Paul is substituted for him, and stands at the right hand of Jesus, pointing upward with his right finger and resting his left hand on a sword. But even more impressive than the attitudes and symbols are the distinct expressions wrought upon those marble faces. In their presence I learned some new and deeper lessons of the Saviour. To me those twelve apostles symbolized twelve gospels of the Son of God, each one a separate ideal of His heavenly kingdom in the human soul. And since that day, time and again, I have found myself saying, If those mute forms of marble can speak so much to a passing traveler, how much more shall the living thoughts of apos-

tolic teaching interpret Christ to men? Nay, how much more shall the eternal Spirit of the Christ Himself speak through His own apostles to the Church, and guide her into all the truth?

THOMAS

VICTORY THROUGH BLOOD

JESSE BURGESS THOMAS

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VICTORY THROUGH BLOOD

J. B. Thomas, D.D.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."—Rev. 12 : 11.

In the battle described in the text the heavenly forces "overcame." None can fail to see how, in the whole book of Revelation, through cycle after cycle of carnage, plague, and tempest, the deepening struggle sweeps onward toward a final victorious consummation. Out of the blackness and fury of the storm the New Jerusalem emerges, at last, "descending out of heaven from God." Into it the "glory and honor of the nations" is brought, and they "learn war no more." Its crystalline beauty, its "harpers harping with their harps," its "song of Moses and the Lamb," blend into a vision of perfected peace.

The triumph, it will be observed, is not over man but over "him"; that is Satan, the enemy of man. In it are fully uncovered the deeper purpose of God toward man—a "thought of peace and not of evil, to bring him to an expected end." Love, once crucified, is now crowned and seen to have won the right thereto.

This exquisite picture of the city of peace tops out the unfolding prophecy of the book, as the book itself completes the record of advancing revelation. As out of the gnarled root, the coarse fiber, the acrid sap, of the growing plant, there springs at last the velvet-lipped and delicately poised flower, suffused with a fragrance that gladdens the sense but defies analysis, condensing the essence, while it casts off the crudities of the stock from which it sprang, so, out of the chaotic tempest of bewildering conflict in nature and history and out of the parabolic perplexities of immature revelation, there is born this fair flower of God, bearing the life, while it casts off the "fashion," of this passing world.

When Christ gave their great commission to His disciples, He coupled with it the comforting assurance that "all power" had been given to Him "in heaven and in earth." He bade them tarry in Jerusalem for "power from on high." That power, when given, enabled them to "turn the world upside down." The "power of God," which Paul so confidently claimed as vindicating the supernatural origin of his message through its visible results, has continued to undergird the movements of history to this day. For it is true, as Richter says, that the "pierced hands" have "lifted empires off their hinges, and turned the streams of centuries out of their channels."

No more definite is the assurance of final triumph than the statement that it is to be attained through the " blood of the Lamb." Highly mystical as this declaration is, its essential meaning, when taken in connection with Scripture teaching at large, is unmistakable. It affirms the objective reality of a transaction beyond our earthly vision, by which the blood shed in weakness on Calvary touched hidden sources of energy and brought within human reach the " powers of the world to come."

Neither here, nor elsewhere in Scripture, is there any hint of the theory that the death of Christ is but typical or exemplary, having no " superlative " character. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, on the contrary, emphasis is laid upon its uniqueness, as occurring " once for all " " at the end of the ages." It is the " image," of which the multiplied rites of Mosaism had been but diversified " shadows "; the substantial reality of which they had been unsubstantial and fleeting educational hints. The " rudiments " of the old and preparatory—meaningless except as preparatory—here ripen into an ultimate fact—the broken syllables of Judaism blend into a perfect " Word "—Christ, who is priest and tabernacle, altar and sacrifice, " all and in all." " Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins "; but neither the often shed " blood of bulls or goats," nor that of a

fellow man, could avail to accomplish the rescue of a lost world. " No man can redeem his brother from the grave, nor give to God a ransom for him." " There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Nor dare we resolve the objective reality of the redemption wrought by the blood of Christ into a transcendental haze. Here and elsewhere in Scripture its solid verity is as much assumed as is the historic death itself. As surely as He died at all He died " for us," that He might " bring us unto God." " We have not a painted sin," said Luther, " and cannot be content with a painted Savior." Even the idealizing Schleiermacher, when he came to face sober reality in death, gladly took refuge in the concrete; murmuring with his last breath, " We have also the body and blood of Christ."

Neither is the language here used readily reconcilable with the modern conception of the death of Christ as effecting atonement only by virtue of its reflex sentimental influence upon us. " Weep not for me, but for yourselves and for your children," said our Lord to the sympathizing daughters of Jerusalem. The incarnate life, the visible agony of the cross, the marvelous resurrection, all these appeal to the questioning intellect and the sympathetic heart. But these are accessories only of the atonement, and not its ef-

fective source. We are no more "redeemed" by them than by "silver and gold," but only by the "precious blood of Christ." As earthward-looking aspects of the great transaction, they invite our attention and study; but we are cautioned that into its mysterious heavenward depths even the angels "desire to look, and are not able." We are not asked to solve the one enigma of the universe in which all others merge, but only to accept the revealed fact—to "believe and be saved." The battle here described is in heaven and against Satan. How then can it be interpreted as on earth and in human experience only?

The old tabernacle was a "worldly sanctuary"—a "shadow" of the outer world then present, as well as of the world to come. And the outer world itself mirrors the world unseen, being "like in pattern to the true." Earthly analogies are the appointed leading-strings to heavenly truths. Let us therefore set the deep realities revealed in this book beside the phenomena unfolded in the world about us, and see how nearly they coincide in the central and ultimate secret to which they converge. For however absurd the notion of "redemption by blood" may seem to the worldly wise, it is plain that the same "crimson veil," that hung before the "holy of holies" in the tabernacle, hides also the ultimate and impenetrable mystery of the living universe; and equally those of that spiritual

realm whose " forms of things unknown " it " bodies forth."

In the visible universe, the one resultant of all patient inquiry is now affirmed to be the discovery of an " infinite and inscrutable energy from which all things proceed." This secret had long lain open in Scripture. For the germ of the unfolding universe is there traced to creative energy; " the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The central phenomena in the universe itself are those bound up in the mysterious processes of life. It is the transition from the study of physics to that of biology, which, as Comte long since noted, has made modern research more progressive and fruitful than that of the Greeks. In the living world search after the hidden source of energy goes continually deeper. The old truth of Scripture is at last reached as a new discovery of science; " the life is in the blood." With what precision the " preacher " of old sets forth the verities of modern physiology in the " golden bowl " out of which life issues—the " pitcher " " at the fountain " which catches the flowing stream and pours it on—the " wheel " " at the cistern," which by its ceaseless whirl keeps all the delicate machinery in motion—the " silver thread " which binds " dust " and " spirit " together in a " living soul," until on being " loosed " the one " returneth to the earth as it was " and the other " to God

who gave it." Each of these symbols points to some feature of blood action, but all alike mysterious. Who can tell what makes the babe's heart begin to beat, or how, in the scarlet knot that then begins to be intertwined, the "bundle of life" is bound up? "The life is in the blood." Yes. But how upon this Niagara mist of ever-falling spray, is the graceful bow of life kept hanging symmetrical, changeless while built of the changing? The secret is there, but he who sets out to probe it must return content with Tennyson's unsatisfied cry: "Behind the veil, behind the veil."

But still deeper mysteries than those of the mechanism of the physical life are here hid. Through this thin film there dimly reports itself a recondite sensitive life—the story of a feeling soul. No mechanical maneuvering can produce a blush—it is the prerogative of a deeper set of activities. Every emotion expresses itself in a quickening or lagging pulse; and fact and metaphor blend in the possibility of a heart broken through anguish. During our Civil War a soldier was so wounded that the cut artery could not be taken up. A comrade was accordingly detailed to hold the bleeding end until the dying man could send his last messages to his friends. Think what mysteries he held at his fingers' ends! By that crimson thread, a whole argosy of thought and feeling and pur-

pose were tethered, and held swinging on the tides of life. Letting it go would leave only dissolution and an empty sea. It was the key of sunset by which he might in a moment shut the gate of day and leave the landscape of earth and sky to fade and disappear.

Yet again it is the tie of blood that binds men into genealogical lines and into a race. It is no less true physically than Scripturally that in making the human race "of one," He made it of "one blood." In feature and form we are individual, but our blood is all dipt from a common and homogeneous reservoir. How, then, does there emerge along its descending flow such variety and accompanying heredity of mind and temper, and how do paternal and filial affection move upward and downward so infallibly along this line? The solidarity of the race, and the intricate maze of tribal, social, and personal relationship and idiosyncrasy, all are spun out of the loom of life by help of this single thread.

And behind life hide the still deeper mysteries of death and its strange interplay with life.

Not the blood in itself, nor the blood enveined, but the flowing blood alone holds the ultimate secret, and that flow is incessantly toward death. The heart momentarily pours out its treasures, scattering them in life-giving flood to the farthest extremities of the body, and their life is spent in the out-flow;

for the returning blood must be forced back in its circuit, gate after gate closing behind it as it is sent upward; it is dead. The heart that ceases thus to surrender its own life ceases to live.

What lies behind death we cannot yet fully know; but we know that we have power to strike through the veil, through which we cannot look, and stir forces there which we cannot measure nor control. A child's hand may pluck open the gate of death; a giant's might cannot reclose it. The spilled blood, ever so carefully regathered, has lost its God-given secret. We can destroy, but we cannot create. "The wages of sin is death"—the only wages we know how to earn; "eternal life" is "the gift of God"; and so, correspondingly, is temporal life. He who sheds his brother's blood sins against mankind. Cain felt this when he said: "Every man that findeth me will slay me." He sins against the whole universe, whose laws are echoed in the human conscience. The barbarous islanders, who saw the viper fasten on Paul's hand, said confidently, "No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, tho he hath escaped the sea, vengeance suffereth not to live." He who touches life, touches the heart of the universe. Reverently let us say—he touches God. For does He not claim the blood as sacred to Himself; not to be eaten, nor burned, but to be "poured out" to Him unchanged by human act. As

the dead " live unto Him," so the blood of the slain " crieth " lastingly to Him from the ground.

Nor does the immediate result measure the extent of the forces set in motion by man's single act. It may broaden and deepen and stretch onward in meaning. The " law of life " turned aside becomes a " law of death." Blood calls for blood. The tiny rill opened by the first murderer's hand soon swelled inevitably into a roaring torrent. The crimsoned earth was soon so deeply stained that only a flood could wash it clean.

Out of the calamity self-invoked by man there is no self-deliverance. Death is the antithesis of life, and not " life in the making." Its issue is dissolution and not creation. The dead body becomes the victim of external forces which it had once ruled. Even while the body lives, the spent blood in the capillaries is powerless to climb again of itself, but must be helplessly crowded back into the mysterious cavern whence it first came. Will it lie stagnant and powerless there? No; for, somehow, it is, in those hidden fountains, cleansed from its impurities, and chafed into new vigor, and sent forth, thus redeemed, to fill anew its revivifying mission.

But whence comes this transcendent energy? The heart whose shoulders carry all the burdens of the body has no shoulder on which it may visibly lean. It gives all other

organs opportunity for rest, but itself toils without rest night or day. Not a local bruise, not a poisoned breath, not a nerve twinge, not a pang of the wounded spirit, but finds its way back at last to the laboring heart, and asks for help. To this call the heart, helpless in itself and unhelped, could never respond.

Here then we come upon the central secret. We realize that " out of the darkness comes a hand, reaching through nature molding man." No power but that which caused the first heart-beat could keep the wheels of life ceaselessly whirling. The channel of renewed life is the spent blood, and the heart that redeems that must be itself continuously redeemed.

In the social body, as in the individual, the same law of redemption holds. I do not philosophize upon, but simply report the testimony of history. The life of the nation, heavy with the torpor brought by wrongdoing, has never been purged save at the cost of blood. Caiaphas did not speak idly when he proposed that " one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." Nor was it a random foreboding of our martyred President Lincoln, when he exprest the fear that perhaps " every drop of blood drawn by the lash must be repaid by one drawn by the sword "—altho he may not have dreamed that the innocent must pay the debt of the guilty, and that he himself must be the final

sacrifice. The failing pulses of the nation's life are oftenest fed from the veins of the noblest and most unselfish, themselves least guilty of the nation's sin. But human heroism has not saved the world. Avarice and selfishness have quickly resumed their deadly sway. The imperfect and ephemeral work of restoration has been like the rolling of the stone of Sisyphus. All efforts to bring back the golden age for the race have failed, until "the whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint."

What wonder, if the anarchy of earthly life thus settles back upon and racks the heart of man, that the troubles of a disordered universe should correspondingly reach and lay a burden on the heart of God. Where else shall we be led to look for the culmination and final solution of the bewildering enigma. The acme of revelation was accordingly reached when God became "manifest in the flesh," and the incarnation came to its climax only upon Calvary. A crimson line had marked the whole pathway. Blood had been shed in circumcision, in the agony of Gethsemane, under the lash of the scourge and the piercing of thorns, and by the nails of the cross. All these but mark the progress of the struggle to its crisis. But none of them could redeem. Only with the last throb of the overburdened, and literally breaking, heart came the cry, "It is finished." Here at last was the "cri-

sis of this world," in which the " prince of this world " was " cast out." The accompanying earthquake, the rending rocks, the torn temple veil, the midnight darkness, the overshadowing sense of present doom, all combine to tell how nature quivered when the age-long agony of a broken universe had reached the heart of the Son of God. Was it, then, only the falling of the pillars of the temple of the god of this world, between which the strong man had bowed himself that he might be caught and destroyed utterly in the ruins? Are these hollow sounds the clanging of the gates of despair? Does the guilty earth thrust out her dead to wander homeless? Has the sun resolved no more to shine? Is it only His earthly life that has been " finished? " Is it the dismal end of an ineffectual combat? " He was crucified in weakness."

Nay, but this is not simply a man; holding only a borrowed life. He " hath life in Himself." He is " the resurrection and the life." The taper kindles again. The mystic thrum of the wheels of life begins again to be heard. The prison-house of death has been broken open and made henceforth the open gateway into immortal life. The portents which brought dread are not notes of defeat, but of victory. The hollow roarings were the rumbling of the gates of day. The glad earth has only released her guarded relics to the resurrection of life. The retiring sun only fore-

tells the incoming of an ineffable light, like that which preceded sunlight in creation and superseded it in the Holy of Holies. They need the revolving sun no longer in that land where bliss is perennial and incapable of time-measure.

Here, then, at the very focus of all the converging mysteries of this undecipherable universe, at the margin of two worlds where death drops a veil between, and hides what lies beyond, is set the cross in which "all things," whether "things upon earth or things in heaven," meet and are reconciled. As I gaze it grows upon my sight. The tree of death changes into a tree of life, whose roots strike downward to primeval Eden, while its boughs pierce upward into the Paradise of God. There beside the river, it "bears twelve manner of fruits," and its "leaves are for the healing of the nations." The ebbing pulses of the world's life are met and replenished from the primeval fountain. "Death is swallowed up in victory"—Satan, the destroyer, is overcome by "the blood of the Lamb."

The causal force is in the "blood of the Lamb"; but it becomes effective through secondary agencies. They "overcame . . . by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." Fact must not only be, but must be manifested and that continuously, if it is to be fruitful

in influence. The soldiers of Christ, in heaven or on earth, gain nothing by resort to "carnal weapons." They are not enlisted as philosophers, or orators, or diplomats; but only as witnesses. It is of no avail to send messengers to the Hindus to explain to them the "immanence" of God. They are pantheists already. The Mohammedans need not be persuaded of the unity of God. Even the "devils" believe that "and tremble." There is a deeper cry to be answered—the cry for light in the darkness, for purity in the sight of God, for "life from the dead." To this there is but one sufficient answer. That answer brings "good news." It is the heralding of a fact. It tells of the "light of the world"—of the "fountain opened in Judah"—of Him who gives "life abundantly." Whatever may have been meant by the giving of the "keys of the kingdom" to Peter, it is certain that with those keys he opened the door of salvation to three thousand on the day of Pentecost; and that this door is to be kept perpetually opened through the "foolishness of preaching."

But the "foolishness of preaching" is mightily reenforced by the yet greater "foolishness" of confirmatory self-sacrifice—"they loved not their lives unto the death." As the missionary goes out to his doomed life averaging only about five years—as his wife leaves her unmothered children behind—as

treasure, talent, and energy are lavishly poured out into heathendom to be swallowed, apparently, like rivers in the thirsty and fruitless desert, how naturally do men ask: "To what purpose is this waste?" So Judas asked when the alabaster box was broken. He did not regard the "fragrance that was poured forth"—a fragrance that becomes precious and immortal only as it wastes. Nothing given back to God can be wasted. The burning victim, transmuted into smoke, is not destroyed, but etherealized and lifted heavenward thereby. The lonely missionary dying among the jungle-folk, for whom he had meant to live, does not fail in his mission. He scatters blessing as he goes, as Jesus did when He ascended in the chariot of clouds. Did not some wondering angel ask, "To what purpose is this waste" when the Son of God put on the tainted robe of human flesh? Did they who came to minister to Him in the wilderness and found Him hungry among the wild beasts, wonder to discover a beloved Son famishing in His Father's world? Did not heaven wonder at the willing agony of Gethsemane, at the silently suffered brutalities of Pilate's house and of Calvary, and the unanswered sneers of the heartless mob?

No resistance against sin becomes effectual until it becomes a "resistance unto blood." Fact must be met by fact—heart-throb by heart-throb. The message that reports no

fact, the testimony that is not ready to harden into confirmatory deed, alike lack solidity. It is not enough that God evince His love in words—" hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us." As death came to man through sin, so must sin be banished through death. The deadly wound that pierced the heart of man cannot be healed except the same stroke reach the heart of God, to find remedy there—only a dying Savior could redeem a dying world.

As I hear the question renewed, " To what purpose is this waste? " a " door " seems again to be " opened in heaven." Through the open arches, I hear the glad answer, the " new song " that floats down from the " ten thousand times ten thousand " clad in white raiment, reechoed in the strains of myriad triumphant harps: " Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us by thy blood out of every kindred and nation and dominion and tongue, and hast made us kings and priests unto God, and we shall reign forever and ever."

THOMAS

THE CHRISTIAN DESIRE FOR IMMORTALITY

JOHN MARTIN THOMAS

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THE CHRISTIAN DESIRE FOR IMMORTALITY

Pres. John M. Thomas, D.D.

"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."—John 11 : 25, 26.

In the early years of the captivity of Judah the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar: and the hand of the Lord was there upon him, and brought him out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set him down in the midst of an open valley, full of bones, which were very dry. Then the Spirit commanded him, "Prophesy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of Jehovah. Thus saith the Lord Jehovah unto these bones: Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live." Ezekiel prophesied as commanded, and there was a thundering, and an earthquake, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. The seer beheld, and lo, there were sinews upon them, and

flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said the Spirit: "Prophesy unto the wind, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, come from the four winds, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." He prophesied as commanded, and breath came into them, "and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army."

The weird vision by the river Chebar meant no more than the restoration of Israel as a reunited and revivified people in their old-time home. The latter part of the chapter makes this perfectly clear: "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, whither they have gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: and I will make them one nation in the land, upon the mountains of Israel."

There has been a temptation, however, to understand this prophecy as an exact and literal description of the resurrection, as promised in the gospel. Something like the vision of Ezekiel has governed the imagination of many as they have sought to realize the great event of the consummation of the ages. The resurrection has been a term signifying merely an occurrence of the last day, a far-off, distant happening, transcendent in glory, utterly marvelous, miraculous, and strange. For the present life it has supplied

a hope, very dear and precious, yet a hope merely, a look forward unto something very wonderful in the distant ages of God.

It cannot have escaped our notice that the New Testament contains a more spiritual conception of the resurrection than this which I have outlined, and which the vision of Ezekiel so graphically embodies. We must have observed that Paul speaks of the resurrection in the past tense, and refers it to the experience of believers. He writes to the Colossians that they " were raised " with Christ, through faith in the working of God, and reminds them that together with Christ they had been made alive in the forgiveness of their trespasses. The more familiar verse is: " If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." Perhaps we have not taken with sufficient seriousness such words as these: " And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." " But God . . . made us alive together with Christ, . . . and raised us up with him." It is a past event of which the apostle is thinking, something that has occurred already within his life, and filled him with the joy and confidence of an achieved participation in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. He does not always speak of the resurrection in this way, but certainly in these important passages, where he is mani-

festly in great earnest, and speaking also from the fullest conviction of experience, he describes the moral and spiritual change which had been wrought within him as a resurrection together with Christ.

In the Gospel of John we have this thought still further developed, and held more positively and clearly. That which is future and apocalyptic gives way before that which is present and personal. In the sorrowing Bethany home, Martha says of her brother, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Then, in correction of this distant hope, comes that majestic testimony unto the life that is in truth eternal: "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, tho he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The utterance is not, "I will accomplish hereafter a resurrection: I will give it at some later day." The saying is rather, I am the resurrection: I am the life. Christ Himself, by His power in the inner life, imparting to it heavenly character, is the life that is in truth eternal. The true resurrection is in this present world, in the moral change by which worthy manhood arises in a creature capable of exceeding baseness. It is the spiritual elevation, the process by which one rises from low-thoughted earthiness to the life of self-sacrificing love, and of sweet and blesséd fellowship with God. This is the re-

sult of attachment to Jesus, a result which can be accomplished in this present world of care and hardship and sin, and its accomplishment is a real resurrection from a death that is death indeed to a life that is worthy the name.

We have dwelt too much on the outward and physical, as well as the distant and strange, in our contemplation of immortality. We have taken the gospel of the resurrection away from the practical and vital, whither Paul and John in their deep spiritual insight had brought it, and have removed it to a remote period at the consummation of the ages. We have selected, not the highest plane of New Testament teaching, as is our duty and privilege, but the more spectacular and visionary conceptions which served to lead men up to higher and worthier thought. I fear that the widespread, popular idea of the meaning of immortality is not much beyond the imagery of Ezekiel's vision. More time for life, and life under conditions where its present severe duties, burdens and responsibilities do not obtain, and a less heroic manhood that is sufficient unto ineffable bliss, is supposed to be the message of the resurrection day.

We should think about these things more carefully. The desideratum in life is not quantity, but quality. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." Better

thirty years, or twenty years, of healthful, clean, honorable human activity, of the eager, hopeful sort, than a full four score years of squalid, fretful existence, wretched and ignoble from youth on, and increasing in misery towards the end of its strength. It is not how long we live, but how much we live. I find that the great majority of people live long enough for their own satisfaction. They are not just ready to die, and propose still further to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Nevertheless when they think of sleep, and by a sleep to end the heart-aches and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, the expression comes quite easily:

> "'Tis a consummation
> Devoutly to be wished."

Few would care to live their lives over again: few would care simply to prolong them indefinitely, under the same conditions which now obtain, recurring disappointments, exhaustive labor, encroaching weakness and disease.

It is another sort of life we really want, not simply longer life. Now what other sort?

We are apt to take leave of common sense when we ask this question, and indulge ourselves in day-dreams of absolute impossibilities. There is no use wishing for life in a country where water runs up hill, for no Columbus is likely to discover a continent in

which water has such properties. I do not imagine it would be very profitable for us to dream of a realm where helpful service does not demand painstaking thought, toilsome endeavor, together with the suffering of sympathy. The possibility of addition implies the possibility of subtraction, and just as inevitably the joy of doing good implies distress when the good cannot be done, and weariness from the expenditure of effort. To pray all the time is not healthful, and to sing continuously would become very wearisome: we do not really desire a land where these exercises would be the only occupation.

Sometimes we are more than a little unmanly in our dreams of the life to come. Exhausted with life's duties and responsibilities, disappointed with defeats where we hoped to gain victories, despairing of finding a solution to the hard problems that confront us, we think some day to leave all behind us, and in the place of many mansions find joy without effort, love without sacrifice, truth without searching, salvation without consecration, and God without agony of prayer. I would not be harsh, but is it not so? How many of us ever imagined Jesus meeting us in the glory land, and talking to us as he talked to the rich young ruler; reminding us of our possessions, heaven's rich possessions, and bidding us sacrifice all, to follow Him? Ay, we have made the very streets gold, and have

set the windows and doors with agates and rubies! How frequently do we think of our heavenly occupation as that of healing loathsome lepers by the touch, or giving life in the care of them after the manner of Father Damien? How often do the toils and sufferings of the apostles, the agonies of the martyrs, enter our calculations as we long upward unto the land over there?

We reach up, in thought, after the blessedness, and forget utterly the toil and consecration under which alone, according to the laws of God, blessedness can be secured. We sing of the rest, in utter indifference to the fact that in the nature of the case there is no rest without wearing, depressing labor. We long for peace, unmindful of the eternal principle that peace is the result of victory, and that its sweetness is in proportion to the skill and courage by which we have overcome. All good things have their opposites, and by virtue of contrast only do they become good. Almighty God cannot create a world where that principle does not hold good.

So the other life we want is not so simple in its nature as we carelessly imagine. We cannot merely prune off the disagreeable side of every good, every blessing, and keep the remainder as our heavenly prize, for that would be like having fruit without planting the tree and enriching the soil, like feeling the soft baby hands on the cheek without the

bitter pain, the wakeful nights, the awful fear.

What then is the other life we want? What is the larger life for which we are longing in our fervent desire for immortality?

It is life with grace sufficient to live in the world and be not overcome by it, neither overpowered by its temptations, nor overwhelmed by its sorrows and burdens. It is life in which the spirit continually triumphs over the flesh, hope over fear, faith over doubt, cheer over despair. It is life in which there is courage to face the toil and self-denial of apostles, and to dare them, and undertake them, for Jesus' sake.

The life which we want, then, is the very sort which Jesus inspired, in this very world, in the hearts of those who trusted Him, and which He is still able to inspire, in this very world, in all who give themselves loyally to do His will. You might be assured of ten thousand millions of years of life, by most absolute demonstration—if such a thing were possible—and it would be of no use to you, nor would the fulfilment of the years be useful, unless you could be brought to such quality of manhood as makes life in itself an inherently joyous and blesséd thing. One day of misery multiplied by a million days of mere time does not make a million days of blessedness. It is the man that lives, not how long he lives, that determines the worth of his life.

And life is worth while, life is a beautiful, joyous thing, just in proportion as the principles of Jesus, the character of Jesus, enter it to make it large and full. Christ is the resurrection and the life in the sense that He imparts these principles, this character, to us, and by communication of His spirit gives us life that is life indeed.

In our manlier, worthier moments we want nothing better than the buffeting world and strength wherewith to fight it, the world of thorns but also of sufficient grace, the world of burdens but of courage also to bear them. The heaven we really want, unto which we have a right to aspire, is the heaven of more of Christ's spirit to meet hard duties and oppressing cares. Not less enemy, but more might, more skill, more courage. More of Christ, and heaven is here.

I covet not the vaults up yonder in the blue; but I long for Christian patience to meet my tasks bravely and finish them in God's fear. I envy no one his palace where all toil is over, all problems are solved, and there is nothing left to worry about: I would like in my life a little more carefully to keep step with that saint of God who knew He had not yet apprehended, but prest on toward the prize. Jesus Christ and His spirit, in this present world, is the resurrection I need.

If we can find Him, I do not believe we shall worry much over the resurrection that

is to come. It is a life that believes the resurrection. The entrance of the spirit of Jesus into our life in some marvelous manner conveys assurance of eternal life. The disciples of the Master are not afraid to die. The way unto that faith is not through thought of the far future, nor by gripping after something very high: it is by downright, persistent endeavor to translate the spirit of Galilee into our particular locality in the world that now is.

The true resurrection is in the present world. It is the rebirth of the soul through the love of Jesus Christ. He that heareth His word hath passed already out of death into life. The soul has won its freedom, and has triumphed over every enemy. It has its consummation in the future, but its reality is now, in the changes within the heart, which a man may know for himself, and which the world must also discover by the cleanness of his speech, the sweetness of his spirit, the energy of his grit, and the honor of his deeds.

"This is the beauty of our Easter morning:
In Him humanity may now arise
Out of the grave of self, all baseness scorning;
The holy radiance of His glorious eyes
Illumines everywhere uplifted faces,
Touches the earthly with a heavenly glow,
And in that blessed light all human graces
Into divine beatitudes must grow."

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